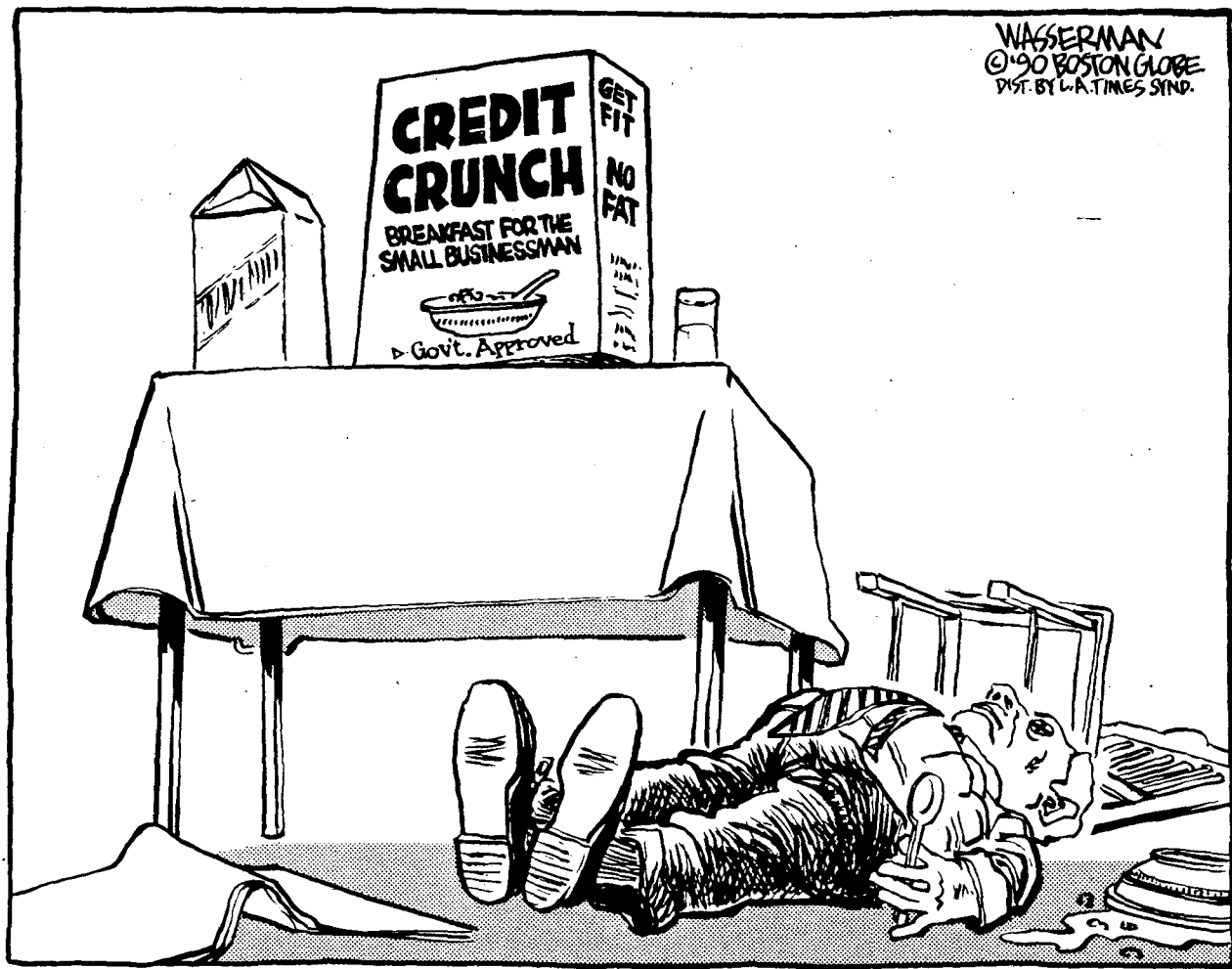


Overkill

Saddam Hussein's lightning invasion of Kuwait has created the first post-Cold War crisis. This aggression threatens to destabilize the Mideast and lead to a disastrous war in the region. The threat is not only, or even primarily, to the world's oil supplies. Hussein's move flouts international law and order at a time when the former superpowers are losing influence over the actions of their one-time clients. Recognizing the dangers inherent in this situation, the major powers quickly came together in the United Nations to give near-unanimous approval of an embargo on Iraq. For the first time since the U.N.'s founding in 1945, East and West acted decisively to impose sanctions on an aggressor nation.

So far, so good. But the Bush administration, clinging to its Cold War habits, has continued to act as if we are—and should be—the world's policeman. By invading Kuwait, Hussein provided President Bush with an opportunity to reassert U.S. world dominance and to rescue the military-industrial complex from its long overdue dismantlement. And Bush has seized the time.

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Banks may take dive in wake of S&L crisis

By Kevin Kelly

While the nation's thrift industry racked up \$500 billion in losses during the '80s, U.S. banks seemed to remain strong. Look again.

Over the last six months federal regulators have forced banks to write down billions in non-performing loans. Credit agencies responded by downgrading bank debt, and investors rushed to dump bank stocks. Talk is growing among alarmists about another massive federal bailout—for banks.

The real-estate and leveraged-buyout boom that fueled bank earnings during the '80s has gone bust. High interest rates set by the Federal Reserve have undermined lending, and tough new federal oversight of bank lending policies hasn't helped. Banks are expected to write off more than \$20 billion in various loans this year, or about five times

the amount in 1980.

Losses may continue to deepen. Analysts figure that high-risk loans to developing countries for real-estate development and to highly leveraged companies total \$600 billion. Banks don't have the resources to cover losses of that magnitude. Some worried observers say the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which insures bank deposits up to \$100,000, doesn't have the funds to cover losses either. "It's not a pretty picture," says Salomon Brothers bank analyst Thomas Hanley.

The outlook doesn't get much better. Bank problems typically intensify as recessions deepen and corporate and individual borrowers become more strapped. But this time loan losses are zooming during the final stages of an economic expansion. If the economy stumbles suddenly, because of war in the Middle East or rocketing fuel prices, banks could be in dire trouble. Many more loans besides Donald Trumps', based on optimistic economic assumptions in the '80s, could come back to haunt the nation's banks.

Banks won't be the only ones to feel the pain. If banking's problems linger for years, as expected, and the rate of bank failures accelerates, taxpayers will have to fund the bank insurance system. And small U.S. companies still looking to banks for loans won't find money available. The resulting capital crunch could undermine the ability of U.S. corporations to compete against well-heeled foreign competitors. Rising joblessness would follow.

Not like the S&Ls: But the current bank woes shouldn't be equated with the thrift debacle. Unlike the thrift industry, regulators have kept bankers on a short leash. Indeed, many bankers believe regulators are getting more strict about classifying problem real-estate loans. "They're identifying problems probably too quickly," says one Texas banker.

Neither do banks seem burdened with fraud. Many thrifts were looted by their owners; not so banks. Most banks are publicly held corporations whose financial affairs are a matter of record. And unlike thrifts, regulators have compelled banks to increase their capital to cover loan losses to 8 percent of total bank industry assets, compared with 6 percent a decade ago.

Still, even if bank problems are lesser than thrifts', the consequences could be debilitating. The banking industry—with assets of more than \$3.2 trillion—is three times bigger than the thrift industry. As a result, a banking

downturn will have a far greater impact on the economy. And the number of "problem banks" remains high. About 8 percent of the nation's 12,588 banks are in trouble, according to banking experts.

What ails banks? Mainly a lack of business. During the '80s corporations found cheaper sources of capital in the debt and securities market. Bank lending dried up. A top-flight company could raise cash by selling short-term debt at 8 percent, compared with borrowing from banks at 8.2 percent. Banks, stuck with high overhead, couldn't cut their rates to meet the competition.

To make up for anemic loan volumes, banks began to pursue high-risk, high-reward business. Banks became big participants in leveraged buyouts (LBOs), attracted by average returns of up to 18 percent. But when deal mania crumbled last year, so too did the profits for banks.

Now they're stuck with a growing number of LBO loans gone bad. Says one top corporate raider, "Bankers are

INSIDE STORY

now looking for former dealmakers to help them restructure their loans." The decline in LBO loans has particularly hurt two big banks: Bankers Trust and J.P. Morgan Inc. Analysts list both as possible candidates for merger with healthier banks.

Real-estate lending has also helped drag down banks. Booming land markets once seemed a panacea for shrinking corporate loan demand. Indeed, banks had more than \$750 billion worth of real-estate loans on their books in March 1990, a 50 percent increase above 1986. But regional recessions and soft land markets in Texas, California and New England have sapped the strength from real-estate markets.

And then there's Third World debt. Despite a decade of writedowns, the major banks are still carrying \$60 billion worth of Third World debt. Though most large banks have reserves to cover half of this outstanding debt, the federal government is pressuring them to raise reserves to 80 percent. That could hurt. Citicorp, for example, could be forced to find another \$4 billion to cover its debts if the government prevails.

From the mouths of banks: Banks are boxed in. There are precious few sources of business left that offer high returns. Even consumer lending, once a bank's bread and butter, isn't a sure thing. The Big Three automakers, for example, finance car loans themselves. And the credit-card business, which produced profits of more than \$600 million for Citicorp last year, isn't promising either. Too many competitors, including American Telephone & Telegraph and Sears Roebuck & Co., are taking market share from the banks.

Banks have responded to the bad times by making cuts. Chase Manhattan recently announced it would lay off as many as 3,000 of the bank's 41,600 employees. Big U.S. banks also are closing their overseas offices to save money—a dangerous move. "U.S. banks are basically conceding business in fast-growing markets like Europe to their competitors," says bank analyst L.J. Lund.

Experts would like to see more consolidations. With more than 12,500 banks, they argue, the U.S. has far more than it needs. But merger is no guaranteed cure. When the two largest banks in Texas merged three years ago, the combined bank was so laden with bad loans it quickly became the largest insolvent institution in U.S. history.

The bailout of First Republic Bancorp, now NCNB Texas Corp., will cost the U.S. government more than \$5 billion.

No one is certain consolidation is the answer. While consolidations would lessen competition, unless the economy revives and banks find new sources for loans, the industry is in for a long decline.

It'll be a costly one if the country suffers a major recession, says a recent Brookings Institute report. With the winds of war blowing, you might want to start saving for the taxes to bail out your local banker.

Kevin Kelly is a business writer living in Chicago.

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This is second in a three-part series on Eastern Europe and its relationship to the Third World.

By Paul Hockenos & Jane Hunter

EXIT EAST-WEST TENSION, ENTER NORTH-South conflict. In the wake of super-power rapprochement, the war behind the Cold War has been laid bare. Eastern Europe's upheaval has not only diverted attention from the plight of less-developed countries, it has also won the West a responsive new ally in its dealings with the "Third World." The new global order presents developing countries with a "first" and "second" world with common political and economic priorities and an exclusive European House that has little hospitality for its Third World neighbors.

While Western leaders can no longer use the "Soviet threat" to justify heavy-handed military ventures in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the West's near-total economic hegemony gives it free rein over the once-contested theaters of the Cold War. The Third World can now look forward to smaller portions of the aid pie and less world trade, leaving developing countries with even more political vulnerability. The luxury of playing East against West is gone. Now there is only one address for economic assistance: Washington, which dominates the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The U.S. and its capitalist colleagues have lost no time flexing their muscles in Eastern Europe, hastening the new governments' speedy withdrawal from the Third World arena.

The school of hard knocks: But shifts in trade and investment will hit developing countries even harder than reductions in aid. The interests that the European investors once found in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Central and South America are now better exploited at home.

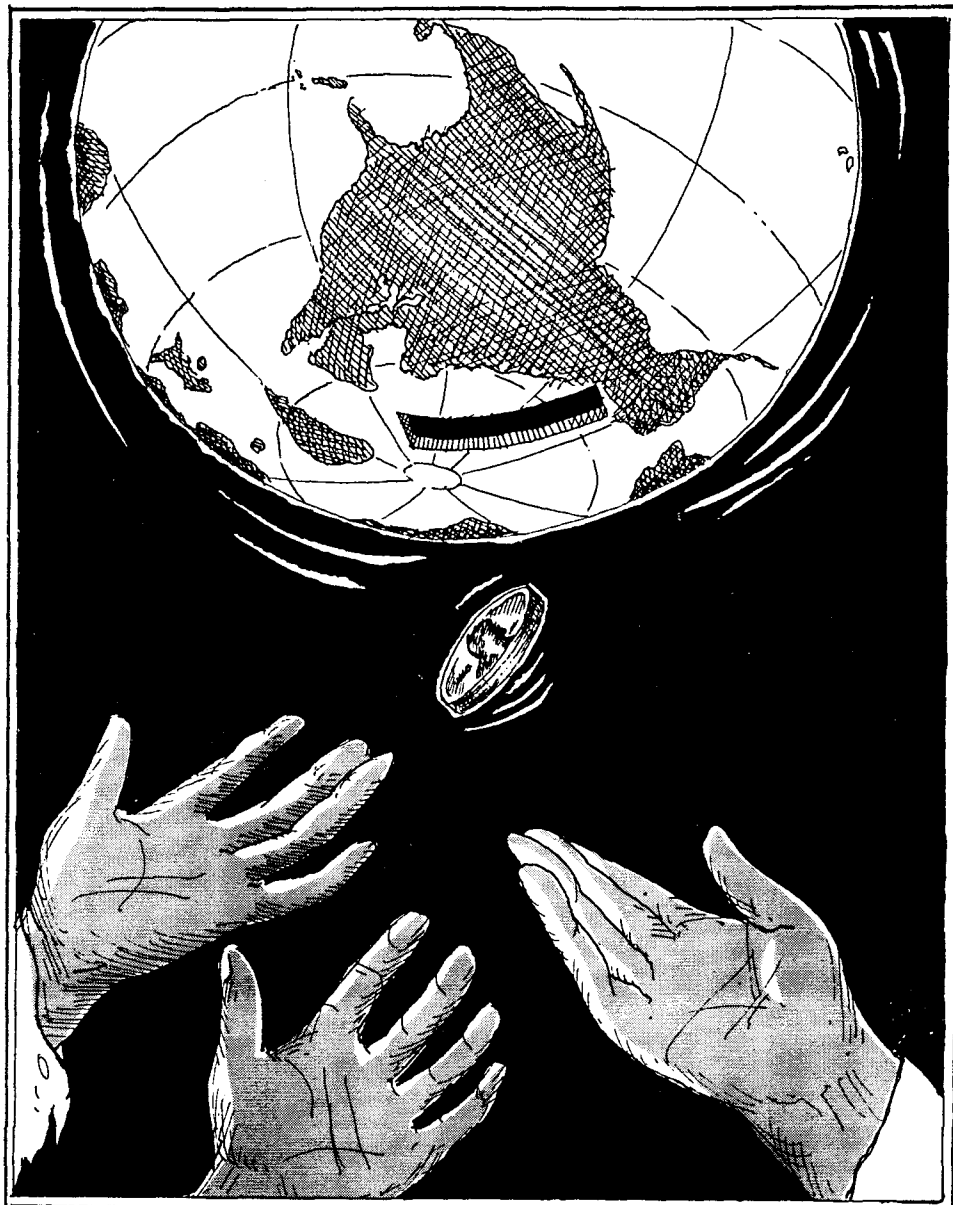
The European Community (EC) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have clearly set their sights on the Eastern market, compounding the effects of almost two decades of sinking net trade with the Third World. The consumer goods, markets and technology that the ailing East European states desperately need lie almost exclusively in the West.

The 20 surviving "socialist" countries stand to lose the most. Beneath a facade of "proletarian internationalism," trade between the East bloc and the Third World operated according to "mutual advantage"—with the Warsaw Pact nations often driving hard bargains. Yet highly subsidized trade with the East offered nations outside the Western currency markets their only chance of evading the stiff competition and prices of the world market.

The dissolution of Comecon, the Soviet-led trade bloc, has met resistance only from its weakest members: Cuba, Vietnam and Mongolia. As the East European economies move toward market systems, that trio, still heavily dependent on subsidized prices for their exports, will fare badly.

Cuba, whose main sources of trade and aid were Eastern Europe and the USSR, is already feeling the crunch. Contracts for Hungarian buses, Czech barley and Bulgarian foodstuffs have not been renewed. The Comecon leaders have begun demanding

Thaw in Cold War freezes out Third World



hard currency for the manufactured goods they once traded for Cuban agricultural products.

The new terms of trade have not totally cut Cuba out of the picture, however. Prague and Havana recently announced renewals of their commercial and technical cooperation pacts, and Romania prudently revised its 1990 trade agreements with the island nation. Nevertheless, the disruption of deliveries from Eastern Europe has forced Havana to fork out scarce convertible currency for cereals, to increase prices for bread and other staples and to ration certain items. Trade between Cuba and Colombia recently came to a halt when Cuba did not have enough currency to cover its arrears.

With the status of Cuba's critical oil imports from the USSR in jeopardy, Moscow's renewal in April of its aid and trade agreements has brought scant comfort. Unplanned interruptions in Moscow's oil production have already affected Cuban industry. And the rapid upward trajectory of Boris Yeltsin has intensified Cuba's alarm. Yeltsin, like the East Europeans, opposes subsidizing natural-resource exports to countries that resell some of those materials on the world market for hard currency.

As Eastern Europe shifts to bilateral trade, the markets and imports of such "newly industrialized countries" as Taiwan and South Korea are considerably more enticing. South

Korea's share of the Hungarian, Czech and Soviet markets has shot up, and the Warsaw Pact members have been quick to open diplomatic regulations with their old foe, leaving erstwhile ally North Korea out in the cold.

A movable feast: At the same time that Western investors are feasting on the fresh opportunities in Eastern Europe, they are losing their appetite for the ever-more-crisis-ridden economies of the Third World. Africa, where the vicious cycle of debt, crumbling infrastructure and political instability has already caused investment to drop precipitously over the last decade, will suffer the most. A report published this year by the French investment group CNPF predicted that 77 percent of French business would withdraw from Africa over the next three years. European big business now sees its

As Western investors feast on the fresh opportunities in Eastern Europe, they are losing their appetite for the crisis-ridden economies of the Third World.

future in cheap, skilled Eastern labor. The capital-heavy Germans are preoccupied first with the East German economy and second with their new eastern hinterland.

The EC, the OECD and most Western governments have promised that their new focus on the reform process in the East will not cut into Third World aid. But the West's assistance to the poorest countries will not rise either. July's summit of the capitalist powers in Houston, for example, produced no new initiatives for economic development or debt relief. Since 1980, the percentage of GNP allotted for Third World aid has dropped in every industrialized First World country except Japan. West Germany's contribution last year slumped to .37 percent of its GNP, a far cry from the .7 percent goal set for the decade.

And who will replace the East European doctors and engineers in Mozambique, Angola and Ethiopia? In Eastern Europe, solidarity work is now private, and only the East Germans have mustered grass-roots interest in sustaining aid projects. Bonn and East Berlin are phasing out the German Democratic Republic's more "ideological" projects, the Carlos Marx hospital in Managua among them.

New rules: As the Second and Third World compete for First World handouts, the worst fears of African nations—that aid to Eastern Europe will come at their expense—have already been realized. Nigeria's ambassador to Washington recently noted that the aid Congress approved for Poland far surpassed the U.S. aid for the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. Prospects are uncertain for efforts in Congress to increase aid to the region by a maximum of \$120 million.

The U.S., the Netherlands and Sweden have actually proposed taking aid for Eastern Europe out of Third World development funds. "We can only divide what's there," explained Mark Edelman, director of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The First World's reluctance to boost African aid makes a mockery of statements by Western capitals that future aid decisions will be based on the same standards applied to Eastern Europe: pluralism, respect for human rights and market economies. While the criteria are laudable in some respects, there is little evidence that political reform by African governments—most of them creatures of Washington and France, who did little to discourage their bad habits—will receive any more recognition than have the economic reforms instituted under the tutelage of the IMF.

The more things change: The "winds of change" from Eastern Europe became almost a cliché in Africa this year, as in country after country people took to the streets demanding multiparty democracy and an end to government corruption (see story on page 11). But the West has found no Vaclav Havels or Lech Walesas to champion among the jailed and persecuted leaders of people's power movements in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Benin, Sierra Leone, Zaire or Kenya, to name only a few.

While the East-West thaw relieves much of the Third World of its role as Cold War battlefield, the West's monopoly on trade and aid and the USSR's hasty pullback to cope with its domestic economic problems give Washington carte blanche in most

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By John Blum

The Yanks are cooling

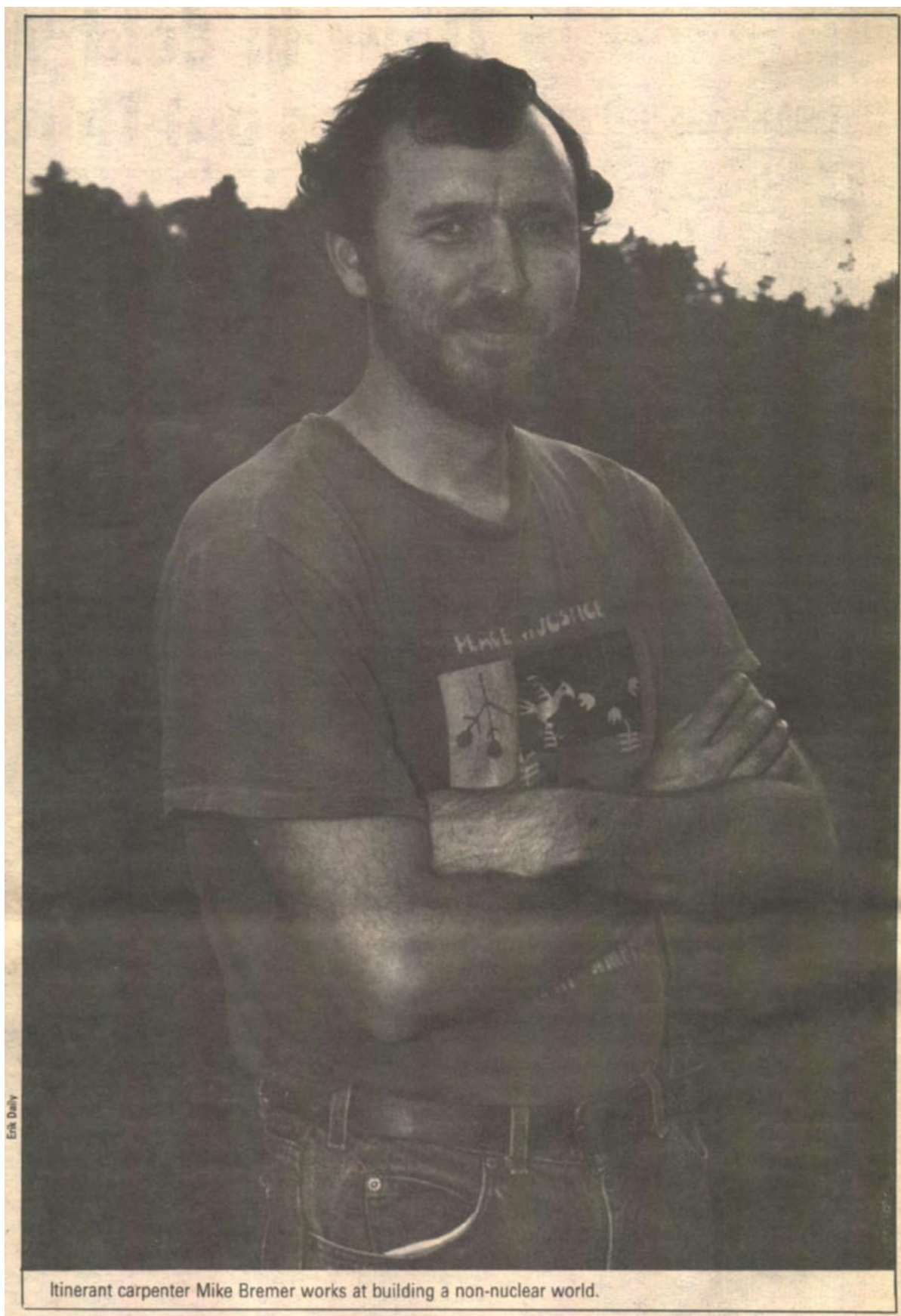
Judging from the cover, you knew it had to be a special issue of *Time* magazine—shifts-eyed, crooked-toothed Saddam in black and white, and our George, no lips, no teeth, just mouth pursed in technicolor determination. The title of the issue: "Showdown... Can Bush make Saddam blink?" Inside, the story's sub-headline reads: "George Bush... has spent a lifetime preparing for the kind of crisis he faces in the Persian Gulf." And after all that preparation, do you think he is going to let a chance like this slip by? No, not George Bush, president of a government that has been planning for the past 10 years to establish a military presence in the Gulf. The U.S. has prepared for war in Arabia in an effort to ensure continued U.S. global dominance and to salvage the Bush presidency. "If George Bush succeeds, he will become the dominant world leader," Henry Kissinger (no doubt breathless at the thought) told *Time*'s Hugh Sidey. "Only America could have put together the diplomacy, the military power and the economic measures to do this. So far, this is an action of enormous sophistication and skill."

A question of balls: Bush, possible war in hand, is making sure his tenure as president will not be remembered only for a savings and loan bailout that was funded by the peace dividend. For now there will be no peace dividend. The U.S. military and its allied corporations, fattened on 40 years of Cold War, apparently couldn't adjust to the peacetime economy. Besides, there were plans. And every generation needs a war and an enemy to call its own. So the president, tugging at America's hometown heart strings, calls up 40,000 citizen-soldiers to help support our 100,000 boys and girls in camouflage. All to fight Saddam Hussein, a man the *New York Times*, the *National Enquirer* and George Bush all agree is Hitler reincarnate. It is pretty primal stuff. As *Nightline* guest Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz put it, would you "let a man like that get his hands on what are essentially the world's vital organs?"

Anchors away: If George Bush has spent his life preparing for such a crisis, so too have his cheerleaders in the national media. There is nothing like war, or threat of war, to promote the fortunes and feed the egos of our national television anchors. Take the story in *People* by Michael Ryan, "Dan Rather Unleashed." In a two-page photo spread, Dan Rather, like a latter-day Veruschka, bounds over a Jordanian desert—Reeboks on the rocks. To his credit, on *60 Minutes* Rather gave King Hussein of Jordan time to explain that among everyday Arabs, Saddam Hussein is more popular than the Gulf aristocrats that the U.S. backs. But when Rather's patriotism was subsequently questioned by a high-ranking U.S. diplomat in Jordan, Rather distanced himself from King Hussein, thereby aiding what appears to be an administration attempt to smear the Jordanian monarch (more on that later). "I don't believe in a lot of what the king said," Rather told *People*. "I certainly have some deep doubts about what he's doing running with a guy like Saddam Hussein." He then went on to reiterate, "I think President Bush has handled this very well. ... I am an American, and I think what Saddam Hussein has done is wrong."

Trusting Thomas: In trying to make sense of the Gulf crisis there have been a lot of historical analogies juggled around—unfortunately this form of analysis is too often constructed around previous U.S. foreign-policy blunders. The secretary of state's sometime tennis partner and former CIA intern—the *New York Times*' Pulitzer Prize-winning Thomas Friedman—is a case in point. Friedman weaves together a series of official half-truths in a front-page editorial that the *Times* labels "News Analysis." He writes, "When Iran was economically strong, politically united and heavily armed under the shah in the 1970's, it called the shots in the region. When Iran and Iraq were at war ... the small states around them could breathe easier. ... When Iran found itself exhausted after eight years of war with Iraq, [Saddam Hussein] discovered that ... there was nothing restraining him from devouring Kuwait. Saudi Arabia ... could not project enough power to hold him back, and the small Gulf oil sheikdoms ... were nearly helpless. As a result the U.S. sent forces to the region to counter-balance Iraq's strength by building up Saudi Arabia. Some analysts had already begun to suggest that unless the U.S. could restore the balance of power in the region in the long term by also gradually building up Iran, American troops ... would have to remain for an indefinite period."

The facts of the matter: Friedman's little fiction needs some massive editing. It could be written to more accurately read: After the U.S. put the shah in power in 1953, it armed his regime with



Itinerant carpenter Mike Bremer works at building a non-nuclear world.

Mike Bremer: Peace Planter

By James North

If you ask the average person to estimate the U.S. stockpile of nuclear warheads you are likely to get an answer of "hundreds," perhaps "thousands." Peace activist Michael Bremer knows the real answer: 23,000. The Cold War may be over, but those warheads are still lethal, ready for another war, atop Minuteman missiles under Midwestern cornfields and on submarines under the seven seas.

And other systems are in the works, says Bremer. "In spite of the talks that have been going on, the arms race has been continuing at an alarming rate. New, more sophisticated and more destabilizing weapons systems—SDI, MX missile rail system, the stealth bomber—are being planned and carried out by the U.S. government," says Bremer. "So that is all the more reason for active protest."

Bremer, 31 years old, takes the existence of nu-

clear weapons as a serious matter. That is why in June 1989 he found himself in a federal court in Kansas City on charges of trespassing. Bremer addressed Judge John Maughmer.

In mid-August of last year, I was one of 15 men and women who entered upon nuclear missile silo sites, where we planted corn, sang, danced and prayed. When Air Force and local law-enforcement personnel arrived, we offered no resistance and greeted them in a spirit of dialogue and friendliness. Their response to us was very courteous, yet they seemed even more nervous than we were. In those few moments we spent together on the silo lid, the revolvers and the machine guns the military carried seemed powerless compared to the immense threat of nuclear annihilation below all of our feet.

Mike Bremer comes from a working-class family on Chicago's South Side. His father Earl is a

machinist and his mother Lillian works in the neighborhood bank. They both support his stand. He attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary and Niles College, intending to become a diocesan priest. There is still something of the thoughtful seminarian about him, although his earnestness never becomes self-righteous.

I am pleading with this court, with you, Judge Maughmer, to do something about the situation that compelled me—and several thousand other nuclear-arms protesters—to act in violation of local or federal ordinances. Today I am asking the court to recognize that international law, specifically the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal, takes precedence over local or national laws in cases where a citizen acts to try to prevent his or her government from planning or preparing for the genocide of civilians.

The Minuteman missiles are buried in western Missouri, North Dakota and South Dakota. These soulless shafts of metal are named for the independent small farmers who volunteered during the American Revolution. The missiles are covered with massive concrete slabs 20 feet across and six feet thick. They are to be launched from underground command posts that are manned 24 hours a day.

The Peace Planters—as Bremer and the others called themselves—posed no danger at all. The fences that surround the silos are not much of an obstacle; one of Bremer's fellow protesters, a 64-year-old woman, climbed over easily. Stray animals, even flocks of birds, set off the alarms all the time.

The power and truth of laws designed to protect civilians in war take on a personal dimension for me. Three of my grandparents fled the war and dislocation occurring in Eastern Europe in the early part of this century.

After college, Bremer, still intent on becoming a priest, went to the remote Chiriqui area of Panama, where he worked in one of the Christian Base Communities—the vigorous groups whose millions of members all over Latin America are renewing the Catholic faith by bringing the Gospel into their daily lives. He spent a year living with a coffee farmer and his family, learning Spanish and learning about poverty. At the end of each harvest, his host took any money left over after feeding and clothing the family and bought a few cinderblocks. The man estimated that after 10 or twelve years he would have enough blocks to build a house to replace the wood, scrap and plastic dwelling in which his family was living.

After returning to the U.S., Bremer decided against entering the priesthood, choosing instead a life of lay ministry. He became a social worker, helping foster children in Humboldt Park, a poor Latino neighborhood in Chicago, and later participated in a worker-owned weatherization cooperative in Milwaukee. It was there that he put to good use the carpentry skills he had first learned from his father—he still works with wood to scratch out a living when he is neither protesting nor talking to groups about why he gets arrested all the time.

In 1986, Bremer returns to Central America as part of the interfaith religious movement called Witness for Peace. The Witnesses traveled into the zones of rural Nicaragua where the contras were waging war against the Sandinista government. The volunteers put themselves between the two forces in hopes of reducing the bloodshed. They also tried to monitor human-rights violations, and they found some of the contras particularly culpable.

One of Bremer's strongest memories from Nicaragua is of a 21-year-old truck driver named Javier Godea, whose best friend, also a driver, had been killed among 34 other civilians when their truck detonated a contra mine. Since the truck was the only way to get food and other supplies to the village, Godea offered to take his dead friend's

place.

"Young people like Javier," says Bremer, "made me realize that non-violent direct action in the face of evil is most often carried out by common people in very simple daily tasks such as this one."

Bremer and two other Witnesses traveled with Godea, hoping that their presence might deter the contras. It was an agonizing trip, made several times a week. Godea peered nervously at the dirt road, scouring it for freshly turned earth or suspicious potholes, taking particular care crossing the shallow river beds. Yet he did not complain and he did not regard himself as any kind of hero.

My experiences have left me with little tolerance for militarism and blind obedience to authority. Yet that does not mean that I have a frivolous disregard for U.S. laws in general nor for trespassing in particular. In fact, I believe that the laws of this country are basically good and deserve to be respected. I also happen to believe that in a world teeming with weapons of mass destruction in the First World and hungry children in the Third World, an understanding and respect for international law on the part of our nation's citizens is essential to our survival.

I believe that the Peace Planters, despite our errors and shortcomings, have acted with the serious sense of responsibility characteristic of citizens committed to democratic control of government. I hope the members of this court take their own part in our trials and sentencing as a serious matter of conscience.

Bremer and the other Peace Planters would have preferred jury trials in which they could bring their concerns about nuclear war before their fellow citizens. But a change in federal regulations during the Reagan years permitted minor charges such as trespassing to be heard by only a judge.

I have made a proposal to you, Judge Maughmer, that I be given a sentence of community service in Nicaragua, helping to build homes for the victims of Hurricane Joan. I made that proposal because in April of this last year the International Court of Justice at the Hague ruled that the U.S. government must compensate the Nicaraguan government for the damages committed by the contra forces. My work with a volunteer organization in Nicaragua could serve as a form of compensation that our government owes to that country.

Thank you very much.

Bremer sat down. Judge Maughmer then sentenced him to the maximum time for a single trespassing charge—six months in federal prison.

The other Peace Planters also got stiff sentences. Katey Feit, a nurse at a children's hospital, got six months. Kathy Kelly, a religion teacher, 12 months. Dorothy Eber, the 64-year-old grandmother, 26 months. Sam Guardino, a community organizer who worked with the homeless, six months. Sam Day, a magazine editor in his 60s, six months. Jerry Zawada, a Franciscan priest, 25 months. (That same year, Oliver North was convicted of shredding government documents and accepting money illegally but received no prison sentence.)

Bremer was released just before Christmas 1989, after serving every day of his sentence. He was reunited with his friend, Mary Jude Postel, whom he had met in a Chicago jail after they were both arrested in an earlier protest. Then they traveled to Georgia where they worked with the Jubilee Partners project, which helps refugees fleeing from the wars in Central America. Now back home in Chicago working as a carpenter, Bremer has no plans to break the law again right away. He wants to spend time talking to people outside about why he and others are protesting. He does not rule out one day going back to prison.

James North is a Chicago-based freelance writer.

sophisticated weapons and told him what shots to call. However, dictators imposed from outside tend to fall, as did this one. After the shah was deposed and the 52 Americans were taken hostage, President Jimmy Carter, in his 1980 State of the Union message, issued what came to be known as the Carter Doctrine. He said, "Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the USA, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." The outside force Carter was referring to was the Soviet Union, which at the time was embroiled in Afghanistan. The architect of the Carter Doctrine is former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski. He writes in *Power and Principal*, "The Carter Doctrine was modeled on the Truman Doctrine, enunciated in response to the Soviet threat to Greece and Turkey. The collapse of Iran [under the shah], and the growing vulnerability of Saudi Arabia dictated the need for such a wide strategic response." At the time, Brzezinski tried to convince the Gulf states to host U.S. naval and air bases, but only Oman cooperated. Months later, with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, Carter's National Security Council tried to send troops and arms to Saudi Arabia—the Saudis took the arms but refused the offer of troops. Majid Khadduri writes in *The Gulf War* that in 1981, the recently elected Reagan-Bush administration endorsed the Carter Doctrine and then went one better committing unprecedented resources to the Rapid Deployment Force, now called the Central Command, that is currently carving out a home in the sands of Saudi Arabia. Khadduri writes, "The Reagan administration seems to have tried [in the early '80s] to persuade one or more of the Gulf countries to accept some form of military presence on their soil, but none save Oman felt the need for it, although all are prepared to accept military cooperation in principle." The Reagan administration, unable to squeeze a base out of Saudi Arabia, arranged to sell the Saudis \$8.5 billion worth of weapons. In a pledge to critics of the sale, Reagan said, "We will not permit [Saudi Arabia] to become another Iran." Now, six years later, with the dissolution of the Soviet threat and Iran tending its wounds, a new enemy in the Gulf region had to be found. Which brings us to the present conflict, and the central question of Iraqi intentions.

War of the Worlds? Iraq invaded Kuwait. That was a disturbing violation of international law, certainly. But instead of sending troops, a more rational U.S. response would have been to impose well-planned and well-monitored economic sanctions. Why was this not done? The Bush administration claims Iraq was poised, ready to invade Saudi Arabia, but people who would know think that was not the case. James Akins, a career diplomat who was Nixon's ambassador to Saudi Arabia before he was ousted by Kissinger, told me, "The U.S. deployment is totally unnecessary. There is going to be no invasion. Saddam Hussein is a rational person; an invasion of Saudi Arabia would have been an irrational act." Because the Carter Doctrine remains a tenet of U.S. foreign policy, Akins says, Saddam Hussein would have known that while he might get away with an invasion of Kuwait, any attack on Saudi Arabia would have brought a swift and hard U.S. military response. What Akins does not understand is how Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney was able to convince King Fahd that his country was going to be invaded by Iraq. But he is sure that when Fahd accepted U.S. help, he was not thinking of hosting 100,000 troops for an indeterminate period. King Hussein of Jordan, a former ally now much maligned by the U.S., is direct in his assessment of the supposed threat: "I believe that the Saudi leadership has been misinformed," said the king. He didn't say by whom, but the implication is clear. It wouldn't be the first time that a U.S. administration has greased geopolitical wheels with half-truths and lies. The U.S. is now the pre-eminent military power in the Middle East. As *Nightline* guest Assistant Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz crowed, "We have a remarkable new outpost in the Gulf."

Tie a yellow ribbon

The conflict with Iraq has forced the Bush administration to take a hostage. *In These Times* has learned that Vice President Dan Quayle, not seen since the crisis broke, is being held in Arizona, perhaps doing time in sand traps. The VP's office will say only that he is "on vacation" but is scheduled to make an appearance on August 28. We trust that will be in the flesh and not on a grainy home video. Over in Iraq, word has it that Connie Chung has also been taken hostage. In an effort to increase her ratings she apparently snuck into Iraq, cross-dressed as an Arab pimp. But she couldn't keep up the act and her Equity card was revoked. It is said she is currently on "hostage" guard duty under a bridge that spans the Tigris. We wait for the next *People* headline: "Connie Chung: Hostage, but pregnant."

A call to arms

Thanks to the well-intentioned *Times*, British expatriates can now register to vote in UK elections—the next of which may be held in the spring of 1991. The offer, which expires October 10 of this year, requires the completion of a registration form and the selection of a proxy registered in the British citizen's old voting district. For information, call Labour International toll free at 1-800-926-5226.

The Army's bad seeds

During Operation Green Sweep—the U.S. Army and National Guard's early-August effort to reclaim Northern California's public lands from a scourge of marijuana—the military upset more than a few potted plants. The Army's low-flying helicopters and combat-ready soldiers, who trespassed frequently onto private lands, angered local residents, who likened the operation to the Panama invasion. Mendocino County's *Anderson Valley Advertiser* exhumed the following from the final paragraph of a story in the local *New York Times* affiliate: "Of the seven helicopters employed in Green Sweep, four of them—the Blackhawks—were used in the U.S. invasion of Panama. Some still had bullet holes from the conflict but were patched up, according to officials who said the pilots were Panama veterans."

Reshaping the circle of poison

Included in the Senate's version of the farm bill, passed July 2, was the Pesticide Reform Act (see *In These Times*, May 9)—a long-sought ban on the export of pesticides illegal in the U.S. The bill will require that all pesticides be U.S.-registered, that detailed container labels be written in the importer's native language and that prior consent be obtained from the importing country for the purchase of particularly dangerous chemicals.

No cause for celebration

August 6 marked the 100th anniversary of the electric chair—the grim reaper for over 4,000 people since its New York debut. The chair's grisly history began, ironically, with growing revulsion to the barbaric consequences of botched hangings, reports Michael Kroll. After witnessing a man die instantly after accidentally touching a live wire, Dr. Alfred Porter Southwick—an opponent of hanging—spent years perfecting his electrocution machine. As the first jolt passed through convicted murderer William Kemmler in 1890, Southwick pronounced, "We live in a higher civilization from this day."

Anti-welfare sales

"Only in this country," writes Richard Du Boff, "could continuing social backwardness be turned into a cute advertising pitch." His subject matter—a U.S. Air radio commercial in which a "drippy, syrupy" voice says: "French citizens get 30 vacation days every year. In Germany, workers get six weeks off. Australians get a month plus extra vacation pay. ... Most Americans get just two precious weeks." And since U.S. Air has the "most [sic] fast get-away flights," their advice is "go for it."

Puttin' on the blitz

In These Times is always pleased to acknowledge the fine job another publication has done investigating a newsworthy story. James Ledbetter's "Media Blitz" column in the August 21 *Village Voice* draws attention to the praises the *New York Times* last month heaped on *Family Circle* magazine for "focusing on environmental concerns and harder-hitting articles," including an investigation of dioxin contamination in Jacksonville, Ark., that appeared in the August issue. The next day the *Times* unabashedly ran its own story on dioxin, datelined Jacksonville, and gave *Family Circle* credit for breaking the story about the town's contamination. What neither *Family Circle* nor the *Times* saw fit to print, recounts the *Voice*, was that the facts in the Jacksonville story were reported in a three-part award-winning series by Dick Russell run by *In These Times* back in March 1988. Ledbetter also notes that the *Times*, in its paroxysms of praise for the groundbreaking women's magazine, forgot to mention that *Family Circle* is owned by the New York Times Company.

Please send timely news about local activities, follow-ups on stories we've run or other interesting bits of information—including your address and phone number—to: Kira Jones, *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

INSHORT



c 1990 Terry LaBan

Federal mortgage scam makes money for the big guys

Suppose you're a homeowner saddled with a high-interest rate mortgage from the inflationary mid-'80s. You're contacted by a mortgage lender who promises the seemingly impossible: you can refinance your federally insured mortgage at a lower rate and don't even have to pay a dime of the usual closing costs. In fact, all the paperwork will be done for you—just sign your name and the deal is done.

Over the past four years, thousands of homeowners with mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) have refinanced their homes in just such a manner. But while the no-cost hook often didn't amount to much savings for homeowners, the lenders fished for big profits by reselling these loans to investors in the secondary mortgage market. Such no-cost refinancing has become one of the latest scams to rock the beleaguered federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

According to a recent audit by HUD's inspector general, lenders "are driving each refinancing with the prime goal of increasing corporate profits," which in turn, ripped off the initial investors and offered homeowners little.

The scheme worked something like this: lenders would lure homeowners by offering them no-cost or "live free" mortgages with lower interest rates than they were currently paying. And the lenders would promise to periodically refinance these loans at decreasing interest rates. But these new mortgages actually have higher than market-rate increases, making them particularly attractive to investors in mortgage-backed securities. Lenders would make their profits by taking a group of these mortgages and pooling them into Government National Mortgage Association—Ginnie Mae—securities, which are sold on Wall Street.

But the initial mortgage investors weren't getting quite what they expected. The return on their investment comes through the anticipated collection of principal and interest payments over the usual 17-year life span of Ginnie Mae mortgages. Lenders sometimes refinanced the same loans in a matter of months, paying off the old mortgages before much interest had accrued. Initial mortgage investors would earn little, but the mortgage brokers would have a brand new pool of federally backed securities to sell.

While Ginnie Mae investors thought they were buying securities backed by typical mortgages, future refinancing agreements were being struck between lenders and homeowners. Carl I. Brown and Company,

a Kansas City-based lender, made some 15 million of these mortgage transactions in the past four years, according to Jeff Zimmerman, the company's attorney.

"The whole hullabaloo was that Ginnie Mae [investors] were getting less interest than they expected," says Zimmerman, putting a populist twist to an explanation of the scheme. But homeowners may have also gotten less than they could have expected.

Borrowers were getting only limited benefits from their newly refinanced mortgages, according to the HUD audit report. In 16 cases studied by HUD, lenders providing these no-cost refinances offered a single interest rate—one substantially above market rate.

In one example provided by HUD auditors, a homeowner with a mortgage of 13.5 percent was offered a no-cost refinancing of his \$55,031 mortgage at 13 percent. At the time the loan closed on December 29, 1988, the market interest rate was about 10.5 percent. With the no-cost refinancing, the homeowner's monthly payment dropped just over \$9, from \$629.83 to \$620.66. Had the homeowner been offered a loan at just one percent above market rate, payments would have been reduced to \$559.69—more than \$60 less.

While homeowners may have saved little, lenders like Carl I. Brown and Company profited handsomely. According to HUD auditors, by selling a \$50,000 federally insured mortgage three times on the secondary market a lender can earn a relatively fast and risk-free \$2,700.

Zimmerman of Carl I. Brown and Company is quick to point out that his firm has done nothing violating FHA or Ginnie Mae regulations. But in a response to the HUD report, then-FHA Commissioner C. Austin Fitts noted that lenders apparently "have engaged in a conspiracy to defraud investors," and she encouraged a criminal investigation. Since the release of the HUD report, both Ginnie Mae and the FHA have tightened their guidelines.

The mortgage scheme was made possible in 1986, when the Reagan administration introduced what is known as "streamline" refinancing of FHA loans. The ostensible idea was to make it easy for homeowners struggling with federally insured high-interest mortgage payments to refinance their loans. It also meant additional protection for the federal mortgage insurance system, since some administration officials were concerned that a large number of homeowners would default on these costly mortgages.

But the real beneficiaries appear to be the mortgage lenders, whose profits swelled from the easy refinancing. So once again a program that was supposed to benefit the average American actually functioned to serve corporate greed.

—Doug Turetsky

By Salim Muwakkil

A POORLY WRITTEN BOOK ON GENDER RELATIONS has taken the black community by storm, becoming one of the biggest underground bestsellers in African-American history. The book—*A Black Man's Guide to the Black Woman* by Shahrazad Ali—has struck such a responsive chord that, in some circles of influential blacks, its mere possession is considered a sign of hip, racial authenticity. According to most sources, the vanity press volume has sold nearly 100,000 copies since its 1989

GENDER RELATIONS

debut; the author claims to have sales surpassing 200,000.

Literary success of such dimensions is rare within the African-American community and normally would be celebrated by black writers and intellectuals. But that hasn't happened. Moreover, the fact that a black woman authored such a celebrated book should be gratifying to those struggling to topple a tradition that has excluded African-American women from the ranks of movement theorists. But, by and large, black feminists have denounced the book as misguided at best, and many have condemned it as a pernicious throwback to a late, unlamented era of patriarchal black nationalism.

Hoary stereotypes: Essentially, Ali's book argues that African-American men not only are victims of this society's racism but that they also have been systematically undermined by black women socialized into emasculating behavior. Those familiar with the gender policies of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam will easily hear the voice of the late patriarch resounding in this volume. And in a secular context, Ali's contentions echo hoary negative stereotypes about black women, but she has cleverly recast them in the jargon of the times. These days, the black movement is under the sway of an amorphous neo-black nationalism that incorporates those same pseudo-Islamic principles percolating through Ali's text.

"The success of Ali's book reveals the deep nature of the crisis in the African-American community," explains Bell Hooks, author of *Yearning: Race, Gender, Cultural Politics* and professor of English at Oberlin College. "We have many unresolved issues to deal with, including those concerning gender relations. The runaway success of this book indicates that many of us would rather take another detour to the fantasy land of idealized patriarchy than to actually grapple with the complexity of our situation."

Hooks, who refers to herself as a black woman advocating feminism rather than a black feminist, regards *A Black Man's Guide* as a symptom of the widespread sense of hopelessness that pervades black America. "Symptoms are everywhere; the popularity of [Nation of Islam leader Louis] Farrakhan, for example, is another one," Hooks contends. She believes that African-Americans are so reluctant to face the arduous tasks demanded of them that they are increasingly seeking distractions.

Hip-hop patriarchy: Hooks argues that even some of black America's most promising developments—like the emergence of rap music and the "hip-hop" culture it man-



Elijah Muhammad's voice rings through *A Black Man's Guide to the Black Woman*.

A Black Man's Guide misdirects the issues

ifests—are plagued with this problem. The dynamics of contemporary rap music are powered by a distinct dialectic; among those strains are two distinct models of black manhood. On the one hand there is the phallocentric, misogynous postures of groups such as 2 Live Crew and Ice Cube, whose favorite word for women begins with the letter "b," and then there is the patronizing patriarchy of neonationalist groups such as Public Enemy and X-Clan.

The explicit connection between hip-hop culture and gender relations was drawn by Michelle Wallace in an article that appeared in the July 29 edition of the *New York Times*. Wallace, whose 1978 book *Black Macho & the Myth of the Superwoman* examined the sexism in the black power movement, wrote that "what seems universal is how little male rappers respect sexual intimacy and how little regard they have for the humanity of the black woman." But Wallace's respect for the style's creative potential leavens her criticism. "I see the problem more in an educational context than anything else," she told *In These Times* in a recent interview.

"Black youth have been terribly deprived educationally, and we're reaping the results of that, both in the rap subculture and in the popularity of a book like *A Black Man's Guide*," she says. "I'd hazard a guess that Ali's book is much more popular among those African-Americans with less education than among those with more. In addition to being an ideological assault on me as a black woman, the book is very badly written and a real chore to read," she says.

Wallace has just completed a book bemoaning black women's declining cultural influence, and she finds the success of Ali's book particularly galling. "The absence of black feminist analysis of the rampant

sexism within black culture has left a vacuum that is being filled by the easy answers provided by Ali's mythic nationalism," she says. The controversy sparked by her 1978 book and other works of that era, such as Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, provoked an outpouring of activity designed to address the black community's intersexual problems. But that spasm of concern was short-lived and issues of gender relations once again disappeared from the movement's agenda.

Womanist challenge: Some black feminists purposely abandoned their strict focus on issues of gender oppression. "I realized that unless black womanists—and I prefer the term 'womanist' because of its nurturing, familial connotations and because I don't have to unload the baggage carried by the word 'feminist'—began to talk about issues in an economic and racial context, our discussions of 'patriarchy' and other structures of male domination had no real relationship to the black community," explains Delores Williams, assistant professor of theology at Drew University in New Jersey and a prominent womanist theorist. "And at the present time, one of the most important issues within the black community is the problem of disintegrating families," she contends. "It's a

Feminists condemn the book as a throwback to a late, unlamented era of patriarchal black nationalism.

problem with economic and racial as well as cultural roots, and if we don't figure out a way to deal with it all other problems will be rendered moot."

Williams believes that feminism, as it has developed in this country, has been a boon to white women and only marginally important for women of color. "Poor black women had an almost instinctual understanding that the ideological feminism being pushed during the early '70s had little relevance for them," she says. "Their oppression goes way beyond sexism and has complex interconnections to race and class. But we who called ourselves feminists never developed a rigorous analysis to address that special oppression. We have to go into the realities of poor black women—and the center of our movement should always be focused on impoverished black women—and come up with ideas and concepts that are meaningful to them before we can expect the black community to support our analyses."

Conspiracy of silence: Wallace connects the rejection of feminist theory to the black community's woeful lack of education. Awareness is a function of education, she insists. And she blames black intellectuals for failing to engage themselves thoroughly in the struggle to help lift the community's collective awareness. "We never fully faced the problem of what was wrong with the Islam-influenced cultural nationalism that seems to be making a comeback," Wallace says. "Black intellectuals never shouted those ideas down effectively, and now they are being recycled to plague us once again."

Wallace believes that black theorists have been intimidated into a "conspiracy of silence" by anti-intellectual elements of African-American culture. Feminist criticism and other forms of social analysis are considered by many blacks to be products of alien white culture and, she contends, this hostility has discouraged many theorists from pressing their points.

Ali's book is a current example of this problem, Wallace notes. Although educated blacks who read *A Black Man's Guide* can easily discern its sophistry and poorly argued propositions, the book's mass popularity dissuades them from pointing it out. "We are often cowered by charges that we're using white society's critical tools to judge black people's works. The fact that there's an element of truth in the charge should not prevent us from rigorous analysis."

Hooks and Wallace agree that there is a distressing portent of class conflict hinted in the mass popularity of Ali's book and misogynous styles of "gangster" rap. "A friend told me that more than 1,000 people turned out in Los Angeles for a book reception of Ali's book," Hooks recalls. "I don't think I've ever attracted that large a crowd in this country. That we would be so attracted to such a demeaning vision of black women, such a patriarchal fantasy, is something that is almost too depressing to contemplate."

But she adds, "We have developed no counterargument to contest Ali's comforting myths. So we just wind up angry and frustrated with those folks we see as vulnerable enough to fall for her foolishness." What's more, Hooks says, infighting among black feminists has made their message seem bankrupt. And since very few black feminist theorists are committed to the struggle of ideas, those neonationalist principles look good when compared to no principles at all. □

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Third World

Continued from page 3

former hot spots. Although superpower cooperation resulted in independence for Namibia, the 1988 Southern Africa peace accord also extricated South Africa from military defeat in Angola, mandated the phased withdrawal of the Cuban troops that produced that defeat, forced the African National Congress to abandon its frontline bases in Angola—and left the CIA free to take South Africa's place in supporting UNITA, the Angolan "contras." Moscow's continued weapons shipments to Angola have not sufficed to prevent a string of recent UNITA advances that have left hundreds of thousands cut off from food deliveries.

Only in Afghanistan and Cuba has the Soviet Union resisted U.S. pressure for such lopsided settlements. Moscow has slashed its military presence in Southeast Asia, abandoned the former U.S. naval base at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam and recently told Ethiopia that its military agreement will not be renewed. Soviet policy toward Latin America has veered away from support for liberation movements and focused on expanding political and economic links with the large South American nations.

While the Reagan and Bush administrations undoubtedly deserve much of the credit for the Sandinistas' electoral defeat, these administrations had Soviet support for the Nicaraguan "peace process." In El Salvador, the Farabundo Marti Liberation Front has responded to the changed world order with an increased emphasis on negotiations with the Salvadoran government.

On the one hand, Moscow's policy change

freed liberation movements and leftist governments from the Soviet ideological orbit. But that independence may be largely illusory. Developing countries are acutely aware that they have no shot at Western funds if they stray from the West's prescribed course. The hasty abandonment of socialist economic policies by Mozambique, Ethiopia and Benin, among others, and the efforts of Nigeria and Ghana to sell off state enterprises and open themselves to foreign investment have gained nods of approval from Washington but pitifully little else.

Yet, as the only political player of consequence in the international aid game, the U.S. is under no pressure to advocate changes in the harsh austerity measures imposed by the IMF as a condition of new lending. Even though many Western nations have written off their loans to the poorest debtor nations, the pound of flesh demanded by the IMF and the sharp fall in prices for African export commodities—a disaster in which Washington has also played a leading role—have eroded much of the economic progress Africa has made in the post-colonial era.

The world's bankers have lost no time enrolling their new Eastern vassals in Western political objectives. The IMF already has Hungary and Poland at its feet scrambling to meet cutthroat repayment schedules, with the other Eastern Europeans queuing up for the same treatment. East European diplomats in Phnom Penh report that IMF arm-twisting prompted their near-total cutback in aid to Cambodia. The Warsaw Pact countries bankrolled Cambodia to the tune of 80 percent of its budget. As of 1991, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe's relationship with Cambodia will be almost entirely com-

mercial, based on pay-as-you-go exchange. Vietnam escaped more easily, with a 20 percent cut—or \$500 million—a year from the Soviet Union.

The World Bank cropped up behind Hungary's recent move to recover its outstanding claims from Third World debtors. Budapest's trade minister conceded the bank's argument that an indebted Hungary cannot afford to have bad debts itself. Developing countries owe Hungary \$630 million, and it is doubtful that Sudan, South Yemen, Mozambique and Nicaragua will meet their obligations. Such loans will be liquidated only for countries considered potential Hungarian export markets or those opening plants with Hungarian cooperation.

Cuba has now become Washington's ersatz evil empire—and the pressure being brought to bear on it is in a category all its own. President George Bush's precondition that to qualify for credit the USSR must alter its \$4 billion a year aid relationship with Cuba was the crassest bullying yet of the Soviet leader. While Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov has insisted that Moscow will not abandon Cuba, the terms of the Soviet aid package are certain to be revised in the near future.

Moreover, the Eastern Europeans are already clearing out of Cuba. Poland is closing its school, and most of the 477 Bulgarians and 30 Hungarians will be home by year's end. Guest-worker and student exchanges with Eastern Europe have been terminated only slightly ahead of Castro's order to return. The Central Europeans and Bulgaria made their allegiance plain in March, backing a U.S.-drafted human-rights resolution against Cuba at the United Nations.

The explosion of nationalism across Europe has propelled the continent in a new direction. In the East, the former bondsmen are eager to play lord. The petty egoistic logic of their new psychologies justifies the redirection of oppressor violence into an attempted rectification of their own national tragedies. Among the freshly "liberated" populations, North-South cooperation smacks of the old communist regimes' wooden solidarity efforts—a rhetoric that was seldom matched by deeds and nurtured a latent racism that now has room for expression.

The bloc partners' cultural and travel restrictions fostered a narrow-minded xenophobia that makes anti-Third World policies immensely popular. At home, the resentment and racial hatred is vented on the 275,000 foreign workers imported for second-class jobs and never assimilated into domestic cultural life.

At the same time, the widening North-South gap has Europe's prosperous half petrified that mass exodus will swamp their lands with the world's have-nots. In West Germany and Austria, new walls have been erected, drastically curtailing refugee and asylum provisions, the very laws that enabled their German brethren to gain exit through Prague's and Budapest's embassies last year. West German solidarity groups report flagging interest and contributions during recent fundraisers. Yet, with Eastern Europe fast in retreat, the Western left may well now find itself the Third World's most important ally. □

Paul Hockenos is *In These Times'* correspondent in Eastern Europe. Jane Hunter is editor of *Israeli Foreign Affairs*.

NO BODY BAGS FOR OIL

U.S. TROOPS ARE NOT THERE TO PROMOTE PEACE

When Iraq invaded Iran, the U.S. stood by. Later we actually gave Iraq help.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait, the U.S. rushed in as the world's policeman, overriding all attempts to find a peaceful solution.

Far from promoting peace, U.S. actions are escalating steadily towards war.

THEY ARE THERE FOR THE OIL

And yet, the U.S. blockade has stopped the flow of oil from two of the world's biggest producers, Iraq and Kuwait.

But the flow of oil was never threatened. Iraq needs to sell it, not hoard it.

We risk trading body bags — and hostages — for oil.

KISS THE PEACE DIVIDEND GOOD-BYE

The Cold War is over and with it the justification for the \$300 billion a year military budget.

Before troops went to the Middle East, we were looking forward to a Peace Dividend. The military was not. George Bush was not. They have found a way to replace the Cold War.

We will spend \$1.8 billion just through September, and already they are telling us the troops will be there for a long time. During war we would spend \$1 billion a day!

The U.S. is playing world leader — and we are paying for it.

SPEAK OUT NOW — REMEMBER VIETNAM

The American people weren't asked if they wanted this war. Just as we weren't asked if we wanted Vietnam.

George Bush and the Pentagon learned a lesson from Vietnam — act quickly and ask for approval later.

We learned a lesson, too — we must speak out now, before it is too late.

That is why OUT NOW is launching a national petition campaign. Copies will be forwarded to Congress and the President.

OUT NOW — BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

I am opposed to a war for oil.

I am also opposed to the commitment of U.S. troops to the Middle East without public debate.

I call upon Congress and the President to pull out U.S. forces and to seek a peaceful solution through the United Nations and the Arab League.

signature

name (print)

address

zip

phone

☐ send me extra copies of the petition so I can circulate them

☐ I am enclosing a contribution of \$20 \$50 \$100 to help OUT NOW pay for future ads.

Contributions should be made payable to OUT NOW and mailed with your petition to: OUT NOW, PO Box 1194, Salinas, CA 93902.

By Paul Bass

Group smokes out tobacco investment

A NEW, NOVEL WAR ON THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY has exploded in the Northeast, targeting the investment policies of institutions that claim to benefit humanity.

Leading this innovative campaign against cigarette manufacturers is a Boston-based group called the Tobacco Divestment Project (TDP). Since its formation in May, TDP has claimed remarkable victories and has sparked tobacco divestment actions throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island, with new offensives forming in Texas and California.

TDP's strategy is simple: pressure universities, insurers, charities, hospitals and local governments to sell off stocks in companies that make, market and sell cigarettes. The argument is also simple: such bodies claim helping people as their main mission, and supporting companies which spend \$3.28 billion in domestic marketing dollars every year to hook 3,000 new teenagers a day to a deadly drug, says TDP, only increases the number of people in need of such help. Nor should universities profit, TDP argues, from the exploitation of youth, minorities and Third World nations (the U.S. exports over 112 billion cigarettes annually) by companies whose continual denial of the harm of smoking offends the very principles of higher education.

Not surprisingly, tobacco companies continue to claim they market a legitimate, legal product and deny that they target teens or minorities in their ads. In addition, many institutions reject TDP's argument that such social concerns should affect their decisions on how to invest their money.

Startling is how many people have sided with TDP in just three months. Harvard University's board of trustees announced in May that it had divested its approximately \$58 million in tobacco-stained stocks. City University of New York followed suit by deciding to sell its \$3.5 million in tobacco-related stocks. Columbia University also has divested, and Pittsburgh's city council did the same. A New York City councilman has introduced legislation to divest \$330 million in pension funds from such corporations as Philip Morris (whose cigarette brands include Marlboro and Virginia Slims) and Loews (Newport, Kent).

Similar campaigns have targeted Yale's medical school and hospital in New Haven, Conn., Rice University in Houston, University of Wisconsin at Madison and Brown University in Providence, R.I. After endorsing TDP's drive in July, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis is currently exploring the quickest route to divesting approximately \$31 million in state government employees' retirement funds. TDP has since targeted another \$100 million-plus in the retirement funds of New York, Texas and California. TDP is also working with divestment campaigns in the state legislatures of Wisconsin, Oregon and Pennsylvania.

"This may be the greatest revolution of the 20th century," says Patrick Reynolds, a tobacco-heir-turned national anti-tobacco crusader. "The sea change in Americans' attitudes toward smoking in just the past five years has indeed changed people's lives."

A new kind of revolution: The transformation began with then-Surgeon Gen. C. Everett Koop's 1986 finding that cigarettes can kill non-smokers via secondhand smoke. After Koop left office, Health and Human Services Sec. Louis Sullivan, picked up the

passionate anti-tobacco-company campaign. Sullivan was instrumental in R.J.R. Nabisco's withdrawal in January of its plan to market a new cigarette, Uptown, directly to blacks. A similar plan to market Dakota cigarettes to working-class women was withdrawn the following month.

Armed with new scientific evidence about the adverse effects of tobacco, legislators nationwide subsequently banned smoking from elevators, restaurants and airplanes. (One federal legislator is even looking at banning smoking altogether from airports.) Most large offices have also become smoke-free. After a Harlem minister named Calvin Butts began leading groups of whitewashers to cover billboards suggesting healthy, happy lives for black smokers, several billboard companies replaced their Newport messages with religious paeans.

Smokers who years ago confidently trumpeted their rights to light up anywhere now find themselves pariahs, hovering in smokers' lounges, criticized for a socially unacceptable habit. TV producers have begun putting cigarettes in the mouths of villains instead of heroes. When William Bennett was appointed President Bush's "drug czar," he had to drop his fierce cigarette habit to gain credibility. "Doonesbury" cartoonist Garry Trudeau didn't let him get away with switching to nicotine chewing gum without questioning whether Washington's "war on drugs" ignores the most widely used lethal addictive substance in the U.S.

Tobacco companies, too, have found themselves on the defensive. Smoking has been declining two percent a year in the U.S. Although well over 3,000 people (most of them teens) pick up the habit each day, says

ECONOMICS

TDP, the manufacturers daily lose about 5,000 U.S. customers to smoking-related disease and death or to anti-smoking campaigns.

The strategy is simple: pressure universities, insurers, charities, hospitals and local governments to sell off stocks in companies that make, market and sell cigarettes.

While the companies have succeeded in finding new customers abroad—where smoking has reportedly increased 73 percent since 1968—those efforts have raised widespread criticism at home. Marketing efforts geared toward teens (such as R.J.R. Reynold's cigarette-puffing, womanizing cartoon "Smooth character"), minorities and working-class women also have been chastised. Rather than quashing stories about such complaints, newspapers and magazines, where cigarette companies advertise widely, now report them. Some critics question how a government officially pursuing a war on drugs can subsidize the tobacco industry and whether placing anti-drug billboards alongside Marlboro or Virginia Slims billboards promotes a mixed message.

Tobacco companies, however, continue to earn high profits and exert considerable influence. Lobbyists recently convinced the Bush administration to threaten economic sanctions to Asian countries reluctant to opening their markets to more cigarette imports. But tobacco-company bashing too has become a growth industry. Hence the rise of the TDP, which has successfully united frustrated health professionals active in anti-smoking campaigns in several states.

"We decided to attack the companies financially," says TDP Executive Director Brad Krevor. Destroying the stock of Philip Morris won't happen, he adds. But "we will damage it, and we will destroy the conspiratorial si-

Continued on following page

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Continued from preceding page

lence [that suggests] tobacco is somehow a legitimate enterprise."

Smoking finances: "The move to encourage people to divest South African stock helped create a great deal of negative feeling toward South Africa," says Reynolds. "We want to open people's eyes to the fact that only six companies are addicting over 50 million Americans. They're profiting from over 390,000 deaths every year...We call for an end to the silent, mutually profitable, alliance between the tobacco companies and the genuinely respectable segments of society."

TDP's campaign specifically targets the stock of five of the six major corporations that market cigarettes: Philip Morris Companies Inc., American Brands, British-American Tobacco, Loews and Liggett Group. The sixth, R.J.R. Nabisco, is privately held and so does not publicly issue stock.

A Yale medical professor, Michelle Barry, has joined with TDP to push for divestiture at the university. Barry recently wrote to Yale President Benno Schmidt and other officials, arguing that Yale should divest to "take a strong stand" against companies that have targeted underdeveloped countries to compensate for their loss of customers at home. "In an era of the 'war on drugs'...more Colombians die from tobacco exported to Colombia by U.S. tobacco companies than do Americans from Colombian cocaine exported to the U.S."

TDP also has singled out Massachusetts and Connecticut-based insurance companies for criticism. "Life and health insurers should no longer compromise their commitment to the well-being of their policyholders by investing in products which shorten life and destroy health," says Krevor. Aetna alone owned \$105 million of Philip Morris stock in December, 1987, he adds.

According to Aetna spokesman Jonathan Powell, that figure is "in the ballpark" and will probably stay there. "I don't mean to downplay what we know about smoking," Powell adds. But the best route to improving public health, he argues, lies in changing individual behavior.

Tainted stock: "It would be a very tough task for us to go through the thousands of stocks we have and see which are 'tainted,'" Powell says. He calls TDP's argument against insurance companies' tobacco-related investments an "oversimplification." "There really aren't any 'tobacco' companies anymore. They've very successfully diversified. Most of the profits these companies make come from other than tobacco. They sell cookies. They sell potato chips."

That, concludes Tobacco Institute spokeswoman Brennan Dawson, is why TDP's campaign isn't even worth responding to. (The industry group usually comments readily to

the press on smoking controversies.) Now all the cigarette manufacturers are part of larger corporations, Dawson notes, "so in fact there is no such thing as tobacco stocks. That's why the Tobacco Institute has no comment."

In fact, those same tobacco manufacturers generate significant percentages of the money that their parent companies take in. Forty percent of Philip Morris Companies Inc.'s 1989 operating revenues came from Philip Morris USA, the cigarette manufacturer, according to company spokesman Andrew White. Cigarette manufacturer Lorillard accounts for 15 percent of the revenues and 39 percent of the net income for its parent, Loews Corporation, according to spokeswoman Sara Ridgway.

While its spokeswoman declined to answer questions about TDP's campaign, Philip Morris did release a two-paragraph statement applauding investors' decisions to stick with company stock.

The statement argues that "investment decisions by fiduciaries should reflect the judgment of a prudent investor and should not be based on issues of social concern that are often dictated by special-interest groups." The statement also notes that in 1989 Philip Morris stock outperformed all other stocks that make up the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Shareholders have averaged annual returns of over 30 percent over the past decade.

TDP's Krevor offers a twofold response: on purely economic grounds, investors can protect their investments by switching to other high-performing stocks. But from another perspective, the question is moot, he says. "If it is both morally wrong and socially harmful to profit from addiction, what matter the size of the profit?"

Paul Bass writes from the *New Haven Advocate*, where a version of this story originally appeared.

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By Eric Onstad

NAIROBI

Pro-Western oasis boils beneath surface



LABAN

education. On a good day he can earn about three dollars—nearly twice the daily wage of an unskilled worker—by polishing shoes.

While a collapse in international coffee prices has battered Kenya's robust economy, an austerity plan drawn up by the International Monetary Fund has squeezed ordinary Kenyans by scraping price controls and introducing fees for once-free hospital care.

Corruption has spread like cancer in recent years. Teachers, who have threatened to strike, say that they are often forced to bribe superiors to get monthly salary checks on time. Over half of Nairobi's 1.6 million residents live in illegal, squalid slums, usually without sanitary facilities and clean water.

Patrick is relatively fortunate. He, his sister and their mother share a 10-by-18-foot room in a city council housing project built by the colonial government in the '40s. The project is named Bahati, which means "lucky" in Kiswahili, the lingua franca of East Africa.

"On the other side of town," says Patrick, "people have big houses," referring to areas which were segregated for whites during the colonial era.

I had a dream: Since Kenya gained independence from Britain in 1963, Africans have filled the once-privileged places of whites, a pattern repeated throughout the continent. In a 1982 report, the United Nations' International Labor Office found that the top 10 percent of households received nearly half the total income in Kenya while the lower 40 percent split only 9 percent of the nation's income.

The widening gap between wealthy leaders and destitute laborers was a major theme in a spate of popular songs—some of them

gospel—which authorities banned one week before the riots.

"I had a revelation," Johanna Wanyeki told Nairobi's *Standard* newspaper after being interrogated by police for a song he wrote about slum dwellers who fought a city demolition team in June. "In a dream I saw Satan

KENYA

laughing as the rich were suppressing the poor," he said.

Wanyeki and nearly all of the anti-government singers, as well as many pro-democracy campaigners, are from the Kikuyu ethnic group, the largest and most educated in Kenya. The Kikuyu, who fought the Mau Mau independence movement half a century ago, dominated the latest rebellion.

Moi is from the small Kalenjin ethnic group, and although he has shrewdly crafted an ethnically balanced Cabinet, behind the scenes he has given plum positions to fellow tribesmen.

Moi also has alienated many people from the second-largest ethnic group, the Luo, who believe the government was behind the grisly murder of Foreign Minister Robert Ouko, the most accomplished Luo Cabinet member. Ouko's charred and disfigured

Over half of Nairobi's 1.6 million residents live in illegal, squalid slums, usually without sanitary facilities.

body was found in February near his home in western Kenya.

Discontent has spread across ethnic lines, though, since Moi has consolidated power under the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU). It has ruled Kenya since independence, but parliament declared it the only legal party eight years ago—the same year Moi survived a coup attempt.

A former schoolmaster, Moi says KANU is more important than the legislative and judicial branches and has pushed through laws undermining the independence of judges.

Critics say Moi, whose stern visage hangs in every shop, office and waiting room, has emptied parliament of critics through blatant election fraud. "The last elections were massively rigged," says Bishop David Gitari of Kenya's Anglican Church. "If there was no rigging, the present problems would not be there."

A KANU disciplinary committee has expelled outspoken politicians from the party, effectively banning them from politics.

Multiparty paranoia: Some government critics have faulted Western countries for insisting that the multiparty system is a panacea for Africa's problems. Corruption and election fraud can thrive among one or many political parties, they say. What is needed is a system where leaders are accountable to the populace down to the grass-roots level.

Gitari and other churchmen have been pressing Moi to hold a conference where a broad spectrum of citizens could suggest changes. But instead, Moi launched a crackdown on opponents the week before the riots. Sixteen people, including two former Cabinet ministers, were picked up by security police. Six have been formally detained under Kenyan security laws, which allow them to be held indefinitely without charge.

Several dissident lawyers went into hiding after undercover police began a harassment campaign against them, breaking up private meetings and forcing clients to identify themselves and their business before entering lawyers' offices.

One such lawyer, Gibson Kamau Kuria, took refuge in the American Embassy before being allowed to leave the country. Kuria, who specializes in human-rights cases, said he was tortured when he was detained for nine months in 1987. Winner of the Robert F. Kennedy human-rights award the following year, Kuria has been offered a position at Harvard Law School.

Despite the crackdown, a handful of critics say they are determined to press on with the campaign for change. "We have reached a stage where people are ready to die for their rights," says lawyer Martha Njoka, who represents one of the detainees.

Njoka, who led a two-day boycott of courts by about 30 lawyers to protest detentions, says a pervasive security apparatus makes it difficult to coalesce the fragmented opposition into an organized group.

All meetings and organizations must be approved by authorities, and even informal gatherings are often broken up by undercover officers.

In Bahati, Patrick pleads for foreign pressure to force Moi to adopt reforms. "What is America going to do?" he asks. "It's our only hope. Here they won't listen to us." □

Eric Onstad is a freelance writer based in Nairobi.

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Living with **FEAR**



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Soviet Jews face rising tide of violence

Has Capitalism Won?



In America income and wealth have been shamelessly redistributed from the bottom to the top, homelessness is rampant, drugs have even invaded our elementary schools — and that's just for starters — and yet our pontificating pundits have the chutzpah to declare, "We Won!"

But the archetypal pontificator in Rome — specifically, the one who's been a key player in Communism's collapse — dissents from this capitalist bombast. It's superficial, says the Pontiff, to interpret Bolshevism's bust-up as the triumph of capitalism or to see capitalism as the only remaining option. He says capitalism "makes people slaves of 'possession' " and promotes a grossly unequal distribution of goods — the alternative being a society where money and capital don't reign and where workers participate in the ownership and management of enterprises. The Pope a progressive? Don't be shocked! *National Review* has derided John Paul as "the last socialist."

You see, as secular reformers lose hope dur-

ing these greedy times, religious people, with their transcendental commitments, are keeping the cause of social justice alive. *The Progressive* sees Christians and religious Jews as "the fastest growing" element of the Left. Not surprisingly, we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an ecumenical monthly edited by lay Catholics, are energetically contending for humane social change and ecological sensitivity (according to *Utne Reader*, we "battle all the major assumptions of our consumer-crazed, growth-oriented society"). But we do so in our own unique "voice" — we're not captive to tired, predictable ideologies. The University of Chicago's Martin E. Marty, a Lutheran, says we "probe and nudge and jab in the hope of inducing fresh thought." Those who do the probing include such original thinkers as Christopher Lasch, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Robert N. Bellah, Eileen Egan, and Robert Coles.

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By Walter Ruby

MOSCOW At 4 a.m. on March 31, Lina Sulla, a 45-year-old Jewish attorney, was awakened by an insistent ringing of her doorbell. Sulla slipped out of bed and rushed to the door in fear. The morning before, Sulla's 23-year-old daughter, Irina Shargorodskaya, had been accosted in the stairwell of the family's central Moscow apartment building by three young men who surrounded her and shouted, "Get out of here and go to your Israel."

When Sulla opened the inner door of the two-door entrance to the flat, she was confronted by a wall of flame exploding into the room. Within moments, the apartment that Sulla shared with her husband Mikhail Rosenfeld, Shargorodskaya, and Shargorodskaya's three-year-old daughter Elizabeth was engulfed by the fire. Only Sulla and Shargorodskaya were home that night; Rosenfeld was out of the city on a business trip and Elizabeth was staying in the country with an aunt. When Sulla got to the telephone she found it was not working. Shargorodskaya, who leaped from bed when her mother cried out, ran into the kitchen to get water to throw on the fire. She told her mother to run to the balcony and call for help, saying she'd join her in a moment.

Sulla escaped to the balcony, but when her daughter did not follow she plunged back into the burning apartment, sustaining serious burns on her face, shoulder and back. When she could not find Shargorodskaya, Sulla returned to the balcony. Minutes later, firemen rushed into the apartment and found Shargorodskaya dead on the kitchen floor, an apparent victim of smoke inhalation.

That is the account that Sulla and Rosenfeld gave to police. While no one disputed that arson led to Shargorodskaya's death, the official investigator and some in the Jewish community have argued that the attack on the Rosenfeld-Sulla home was motivated by something other than anti-Semitism. Even so, in the weeks since the crime, news of the death of Shargorodskaya has been like a slow-motion time bomb detonating in the psyche of Soviet Jewry. Few people have any hard information on the case, but everyone seems to be discussing it, often in hushed and fearful tones.

Anti-Semitism in action: The reason for the intense interest is clear. For months there have been insistent rumors that anti-Jewish pogroms were imminent in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities. Leaders of anti-Semitic groups such as Pamyat (Memory) have in the past made remarks appearing to endorse violence against Jews, and numerous Jewish families reported during January and February of this year that they received anonymous telephone calls and letters telling them in abusive and often obscene language to get out of the Soviet Union—or else. But the death of Shargorodskaya appears to be the first concrete instance in which anti-Semites have gone beyond threats and put into action their hateful intentions toward Jews.

Both the leadership of the Jewish community and the Israeli consular delegation here maintained a hands-off approach to the case, perhaps to avoid spreading panic in the skittish Jewish community. In the two weeks after Shargorodskaya's death, her bereaved parents contend, not one Jewish community leader or member of the Israeli consular delegation called them or came to their home. One community leader, Mikhail Chlenov, president of the Vaad, the umbrella group of Soviet Jewry, said that when he called two weeks after the tragedy he was told rather coolly by Rosenfeld that his help was not needed. Rosenfeld, however, denies that account.

Then, in mid-April, Rosenfeld says, he found a barely discernable notation scrawled onto the wall outside his mother's door: "Kill Jews." At that point, Rosenfeld says, he took his mother, wife, and granddaughter to an undisclosed location hundreds of kilometers outside of Moscow. He said the family would return to Moscow only to board a plane for Israel once they have received permission to leave and have secured tickets.

Since the Shargorodskaya case, there have been more tragedies for Jews in farflung provinces of the USSR. On April 18 in Kislovodsk, a resort town in the northern Caucasus, six people, several of them escaped convicts, invaded the home of a prosperous Sephardic Jewish family to demand that they turn over money and diamonds.

When 51-year-old Zavla Izyayev did not respond quickly enough, the assailants killed him, horribly disfiguring his body in the process. The attackers are said to have tied up and tortured with hot irons Izyayev's wife Yael and 21-year-old

son Roman, telling them, "We have hated Jews since childhood. We will get you, and the whole country will support us." The criminals then tried to kill Yael and Roman Izyayev by shutting them in the kitchen and turning on the gas. But the two survived to tell their story, and during the first week in May police arrested four men. Three were members of the mainly Moslem Ossetian and Ingush national groups in the area; the other was Ukrainian.

The Caucasus region and Central Asia are areas of extreme instability, where white-hot nationalist passions have exploded in the last two years into violence between Azerbaijanis and Armenians and Uzbek massacres of Meshketian Turks have left hundreds dead. So it hardly seems surprising that some of this popular animus is being turned against Jews. But is it possible that similar excesses against Jews could take place in sophisticated and increasingly westernized Moscow, the very center of Soviet power and the city in which the liberal and humanistic Democratic Russia faction swept to power in the city soviet this spring? This is the life-and-death calculation that virtually every adult member of this city's approximately 200,000-strong Jewish community has been forced to confront in recent months. The conclusion to which most seem to be coming, albeit in many cases with great reluctance, is that murderous violence against Moscow Jews is ever more likely, and that the best option available to most Jews under the deteriorating circumstances is to emigrate to Israel as rapidly as possible.

New motive: The decision of the Bush administration last year to restrict Soviet Jewish emigration to the U.S. mainly to people who have immediate relatives in the country confronted the majority of Soviet Jews with a stark choice—either go to Israel or take their chances in the new Soviet Union. The deteriorating economic conditions in the Soviet Union also play an important contributing role in the decision of Moscow Jews to emigrate, but this factor seems less significant than in years past now that the "golden land" of perceived economic opportunity—America—is effectively closed to most Soviet Jews. In scores of discussions this reporter has had with Soviet Jews over the past two months, the paramount consideration in the decision of Moscow Jews to emigrate was clearly a fear verging on panic that they and their loved ones could be victims of anti-Semitic violence.

Often this fear seems to have a concrete basis in reality. In Moscow today, most Jews one talks to seem to know someone or to have heard of someone who has received anti-Semitic threats—usually in the form of an anonymous telephone call. Sometimes the callers identify themselves as being members of Pamyat, but usually there is no organization mentioned. Such threats were especially prevalent in the months of January and February, when the Irgun Zioni

(Zionist Organization), a Soviet Jewish pro-Israel group tabulated 70 such cases in the Moscow area alone and estimated that there were hundreds of such calls in cities across the USSR. According to most accounts, the threat campaign has continued at a lower level in the months since.

Eli Lifshitz, a Irgun Zioni leader who is involved in an effort to provide emotional support for the victims of such threats, says that "many of the Jews being harassed in this way are weak and vulnerable elderly people. In almost every case, the people being victimized are highly assimilated Jews without close ties to the organized community."

Lifshitz and others believe that those making the threats are often using anti-Semitism as a tool to achieve an ulterior motive, usually to frighten people into emigrating or into fleeing their homes so the persecutors can take over their apartments. While some Jews theorize that the perpetrators of the threat campaign are criminal elements linked to the shadowy so-called "Soviet mafia," Lifshitz says he has evidence that the harassment campaign is

being perpetrated by people in positions of authority who may or may not be in complicity with members of Pamyat and other anti-Semitic movements. He pointed to the case of an elderly Jewish couple named Wolf in the Moscow suburb of Odinstovo who were openly persecuted by neighbors who called them "dirty Jews" and poured cooking gas and insect-killing chemicals into holes in their ceiling. But, according to Lifshitz, when the couple went to the local police office to complain, they were effectively told that the police could be of no use to them, since, in fact, an officer at the police station was interested in inheriting their apartment. Lifshitz adds, "Even in cases where the police are not involved [in harassing Jews], it is absolutely useless [for victims] to complain to the police because nothing is ever done to track down the perpetrators."

Alexander Schmuckler, editor of the *Information Bulletin on the Problems of Repatriation and Jewish Culture* and one of the most articulate leaders of Soviet Jewry, expresses similar fears. In contrast to Lifshitz, Schmuckler said that while he does not doubt that threats against Jews have been made, he does not believe that there is an organized campaign afoot to terrorize Jews. "The main problem is not Pamyat," Schmuckler says, "but rather the intense feeling against Jews in the general population. There are many young people around now who are capable of beating or killing Jews."

Exaggerated threat: A cursory examination of Pamyat does nothing to validate the idea, so prevalent in the West, that the movement is a rapidly growing juggernaut poised to make a bid for power in Russia in the near future or to carry out a large-scale massacre of Jews. Indeed, Pamyat appears to be less a coherent organization than a klatsch of seven or more mutually antagonistic mini-groups, each with its own little *fürher* and a small core of followers, strutting around Moscow in black shirts or military dress. The various Pamyat spokesmen seem to focus much of their venom on their rivals for supremacy within the movement, accusing each other of being willing stooges of the KGB and the international conspiracy of "Zionist Masons" supposedly in control of the Soviet government.

Vladimir Tumarkin, an influential official of the Central Committee of the Communist Party with responsibility both for human rights in general and Jewish issues in particular, said the problem of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union was "terribly serious...a crisis situation that is bringing about emigration of a very massive character. There are anti-Semitic articles in the mass media and significant anti-Semitism within the intelligentsia." Tumarkin admits the existence of a threat campaign against Jews, contending that "it is a result of the climate. When 'Zionist' equals 'Jew' equals 'zhid' [kike], the effect on the popular consciousness is very deep." Asked whether the Ministry of Justice and police were ready to aggressively pursue persons engaging in anti-Semitic threats, Tumarkin replied, "I doubt that it will happen soon."

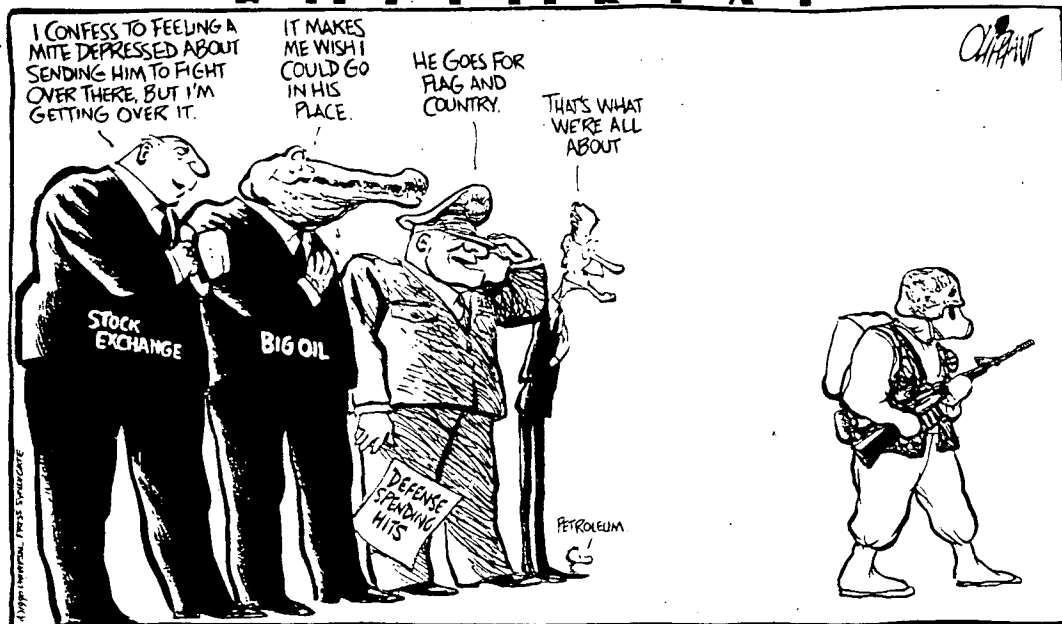
Tumarkin's pessimism was echoed in a May 4 press conference by Alexander Yakovlev, a member of the Politburo and Presidential Council and the man often seen as President Mikhail Gorbachov's political alter ego. Confirming that "there are some anti-Semitic phenomena in this country.... Such nationalist, chauvinistic groupings do exist and are active," he added, "I would agree that legislation in this field is lagging behind and is very timid."

But while welcoming Yakovlev's comments, Soviet Jews remain perplexed and angered by the continuing silence on the issue of anti-Semitism by the No. 1 moral and political force in the country—Mikhail Gorbachov. For months, both Soviet Jewish leaders such as the Vaad's Chlenov and Schmuckler and Western Jewish leaders such as Elie Wiesel have been urging Gorbachov to make a personal statement strongly condemning rising anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union and promising to crack down hard on open manifestations of the phenomenon. But Gorbachov left it to other officials to argue that an official statement by the president against anti-Semitism would only increase popular anti-Semitism by alienating all other Soviet national groups, who would demand to know why Gorbachov was singling out Jews for special concern at a time when Armenians and Azeris are engaged in open warfare and when the problems of many Soviet national groups are acute.

Walter Ruby recently returned from Moscow.

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EDITORIAL



Continued from front cover

While we support the U.N. sanctions, we oppose Bush's unilateral military initiative. A time for military action against Iraq may come if the embargo is broken. If so, it should be through a U.N.-sponsored and -supervised force, not the action of an administration clinging to outmoded goals and methods.

The administration gives various reasons for its massive mobilization of troops and weapons in the Mideast. One of these reasons, if true, would be compelling—that Saddam Hussein is bent on limitless expansion à la Hitler. But while Iraq had both motive and means to invade Kuwait, it had neither to move into Saudi Arabia. First, Kuwait, along with Iraq, had been a part of the Ottoman province of Basra until World War I, when Britain took it over as a protectorate. In 1961 Britain granted Kuwait independence despite the objections of Iraq, which claimed a traditional right over the territory.

Second, for many months preceding the invasion, Kuwait had been under pressure from Iraq and other OPEC states to reduce its oil output so that prices could be raised to \$25 per barrel. Kuwait refused, forcing prices down and seriously affecting Iraq's economy, which was in bad shape as a result of the 8-year war with Iran.

Third, Iraq's military prowess has been grossly exaggerated by the administration and the American media. While Iraq does have the largest and best-trained army in the region, most of its forces are still deployed along the lengthy border with Iran. If Hussein had intended to invade Saudi Arabia, he would have begun making peace with Iran before invading Kuwait. The concessions now made are clearly a defensive move, made out of fear of an American invasion.

Finally, while Hussein's seizure of Kuwait enjoys wide support among Arabs in the area, an invasion of Saudi Arabia would turn the tide against him and lead to the mobilization of regional forces that are greater than his own. Hussein must have been aware of Iraq's inevitable isolation under such circumstances. It would have taken someone not only greedy but insane to take such a step.

Vital energy: Iraq moved against Kuwait to secure higher prices for its oil. Hussein wants these prices because he needs the additional revenue. But to get that revenue he also needs to maintain a high volume of sales. At the recent OPEC meeting, Hussein fought for a \$25 level, while Saudi Arabia indicated it would be happy with \$21 per barrel. The \$4 difference per barrel translates into an additional 5 cents a gallon at the gas pump, but it means billions of dollars a year for Iraq. Yet, like all the other OPEC countries, Iraq has little to gain by prices much higher than \$25 to \$30 per barrel. Prices higher than that would stimulate the pumping of marginal wells in the West. It would force the rapid development of alternative energy sources, as well as serious conservation measures. And before long, it would cut sharply into OPEC's volume of sales, eventually forcing prices way down.

But at \$25 to \$30 a barrel, OPEC has little to worry about. Like the Reagan administration before it, the Bush administration has shown no interest in reducing our dependence on oil—and therefore on the Mideast. Efforts were begun to increase the energy efficiency of American industry and to find alternative and renewable sources during the Carter administration. But Reagan ended support for such efforts, and Bush has continued to oppose them. Even in this current crisis the president has barely mentioned conservation, much less an intention to speed up development of alternative energy sources. Given this dismal record—and Bush's close personal ties to the oil industry—his utterances about the threat to "our way of life" posed by Hussein's action cannot be taken seriously.

With the end of the Cold War, the rationale for squandering billions of dollars a year on military contractors lost all credibility. For those in the military-industrial complex, there was scary talk about

a peace dividend—the transfer of money from armaments to spending on the social needs of the American people. Popular sentiment for drastic reductions in military spending was so strong that even the administration pretended to make significant cuts in the arms budget, while the Senate cut another \$18 billion and the House—the branch of government most sensitive to popular opinion—whittled out an additional \$6 billion. In truth, these token cuts have been ballyhooed as much more than they are in an administration effort to forestall a genuine reorientation of our national economy toward educating our youth, caring for our sick, housing the homeless, safely storing our toxic waste and rebuilding our infrastructure.

In public utterances the president has been stressing the idea that his dispatch of military force to the Persian Gulf has been a concerted action by all nations acting under the authority of the U.N. In fact, as U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar warned two weeks ago, unilateral military action by the United States has not been approved by the U.N. "Any intervention, whatever the country, would not be in accordance with either the letter or the spirit of the United Nations Charter," Perez de Cuellar said. And within the Security Council, all other members, including Britain, France, the Soviet Union and China, want the council to use the procedures outlined in the charter. These authorize military action under Article 42 only if it is determined that the sanctions are not being enforced.

Unfortunately for the American people, but luckily for Bush, Hussein came to the president's rescue. Thanks to Hussein, the budget crisis has faded away, S&L thievery has disappeared from view and massive military spending is back in style. "New Deployment in Gulf May Slow Drive for Deep Cuts in Military Budget," went one recent headline, while the president cajoled delegates at the convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to help him "convince the Congress, given recent events, to adequately fund our defense budget." Suddenly the president is spending \$15 million a day to put 100,000 American troops in Saudi Arabia and sounds as if he's itching to increase that to \$14.5 billion a day for a shootout with Iraq.

Meanwhile, Japan, Germany and the other industrialized nations are happy to sit back and let the "last remaining superpower" play world policeman, while they go about their business. The irony here is that Bush and his cronies think they are defending freedom—by which they mean the ability to get rich at other peoples' expense—when in fact they are freezing us into the pattern that has all but destroyed our industry and our work force, allowing other nations unburdened by excessive military spending to forge ahead. The administration action in the Persian Gulf, whether it results in a shooting war or not, will exacerbate every one of our many crises and accelerate the speed with which we are falling behind the rest of the industrialized world. In every sense, Bush's policy is a disaster.

Thin support: When an American president beats the war drums, the American people initially rally behind him. This time is no exception, although the large majorities that now support him say we should take military action only to prevent an invasion of Saudi Arabia or to stop mistreatment of American hostages. The more likely developments enjoy only minority support. Thus, according to a *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll, only 43 percent support military action if Iraq refuses to withdraw from Kuwait, only 39 percent support action in the face of a major oil shortage and only 27 percent support it to prevent gasoline from going over \$2 per gallon. And, of course, these figures all reflect the high point of public outrage over Hussein's actions. This is thin support, and it won't last long, especially if someone in public life takes a principled stand against the administration's move into the Mideast. If we had a functioning two-party system we might expect to see some gutsy Democrat take the lead.

IN THESE TIMES

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LETTERS

Pan Am Flight 103

MY DAUGHTER, THEODORA COHEN, WAS ONE OF those killed in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, so I was very interested in Larry Penner and William Blum's article (*ITT*, Aug. 1) on the bombing. Unfortunately, I was also very disappointed by it. The Pan Am 103 story is grim, terrible and revealing. There is much you could and should have said. But the article concentrates on a side-show called the Interfor report.

Interfor is an investigative outfit run by a shadowy figure named Juval Aviv, who claims that he once was a top man in Israeli security. His claim, however, is dubious. As Penner and Blum pointed out, Aviv was hired by Pan Am, and the report he produced tells an exotic tale of CIA drug smuggling and assassination. But the key element in the report—for those who paid for it—was that it frees Pan Am from blame for lax security that might have allowed the bomb to get on the plane. Pan Am and its insurers now face hundreds of millions of dollars of potential damages. Even without the lawsuits, Pan Am is very nearly bankrupt.

The article duly notes that Pan Am would benefit greatly if the report gained credibility, yet the overall impression it leaves is that the report is credible and that the press is somehow ignoring this important story. This is nonsense.

Aviv has not produced a shred of evidence to support his tale—which, by the way, is just one of many unsupported conspiracy theories that have been floated regarding the Pan Am bombing. Far from ignoring the story, reporters such as the authors of *The Fall of Pan Am 103* and those who did the research for *Prime Time Live* tried to check the story out and came to the conclusion that there was nothing to it. The Interfor report, like much in the Pan Am 103 case, is currently under court seal. Pan Am has fought hard to keep information secret. But, mysteriously, the Interfor report "leaked." In fact, Aviv was shopping it around to the press, to Congress, even to family members.

The source was so tainted that no one was interested until Aviv or one of his associates found Rep. James Traficant (D-OH), one of the more colorful and less reputable members of the House. Traficant's current crusade is to save the reputation of a one-time Nazi rocket scientist who has been accused of using slave labor in his factory. Traficant held a number of press conferences on the Interfor information that were widely reported both here and in Europe. The British press even reported on a bizarre attempt by an Interfor operative to set up a couple of Pan Am baggage handlers to take the fall. The attempt failed, but it gives you an idea of the kind of people we are dealing with.

Pan Am officials will not say whether they actually believe the Interfor report. They probably don't, but it is still useful to them. Using the report, they can try to subpoena tons of government documents. This could delay for several years the civil trial now scheduled to begin early next year. With such a long delay, family members would become discouraged and settle out of court, saving Pan Am a great deal of money and bad publicity.

A few of the victims' family members have been taken in by the report, but lawyers for

the vast majority of the families have petitioned the court to have the Interfor report thrown out. We don't want to hide information from the public just to get a big settlement from Pan Am. When your child is murdered, money is not uppermost in your mind. Truth is. If Aviv has solid information of this CIA plot, let him bring it forward now. Delaying a trial for several years does not serve the truth; it serves only Pan Am.

It now seems clear that the bomb came aboard Flight 103 in an unaccompanied piece of luggage, probably as an interline bag from an Air Malta flight. In March 1988 Pan Am changed its procedure regarding unaccompanied luggage. The bags were only to be X-rayed, but Pan Am and everybody else knew that X-rays cannot detect the type of bomb used to blow up Flight 103. Pan Am violated one of the most basic rules of airline security. How did the Federal Aviation Administration allow them to get away with it? This question has not been adequately answered, and it is the one you should be raising.

Daniel Cohen
Port Jervis, N.Y.

Immoral silence

THE READERS OF *IN THESE TIMES* ARE PROBABLY familiar with the selective indignation demonstrated by many pro-Israeli "progressives" when they denounce apartheid but refuse to acknowledge the repressive and racist characteristics of the Israeli state. It's quite disheartening to observe.

I noticed it again recently on the part of Neighbor to Neighbor, an organization committed to ending U.S. aid to El Salvador but apparently unwilling to criticize Israel, even when it is clearly appropriate. In a donation letter/questionnaire, Neighbor to Neighbor poses this rhetorical question:

"Currently our government is providing billions of dollars in military aid to repressive regimes, such as South Korea and El Salvador. Do you agree this is a good use of our tax dollars?"

I was outraged by the omission of Israel in this question. As *In These Times* has reported, the Israeli Defense Forces routinely shoot Palestinian demonstrators (more than 800 killed since the intifada began), while Korea's Roh Tae Woo regime does not.

As for U.S. tax dollars, in the last eight years about \$2 billion has gone to El Salvador in military aid, which has consequences I do not want to minimize. But the fact is that Israel received about that amount in military aid each year! Tax money that goes to tear-gassing, shooting

and—in the words of Yitzhak Rabin—"breaking the bones" of Palestinians who dare to protest Israeli military occupation.

I sent letters to Neighbor to Neighbor expressing the above sentiments and insisted they acknowledge that Palestinians are our neighbors too. Of course, they will continue with their current silence on Israel because financial support by pro-Israeli liberals is too important to their operation to be jeopardized over the trivial recognition of universal moral principles.

Robert J. Yamada
Seaside, Calif.

Disservice to civil rights

I ENJOY JOHN JUDIS' PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONAL issues. Readers who object to Judis' stands usually make me appreciate his unorthodox approach even more. However, the article "Democrats go wrong on civil-rights revisions" (*ITT*, July 4) is greatly disturbing. By focusing on false issues that have become defined through relentless conservative rhetoric and archaic, misplaced hysterics about employment quotas and affirmative action, Judis miseducates your readers.

Overturning key Supreme Court decisions, as the Civil Rights Act of 1990 would do, would restore standards that existed for 18 years. These standards did not lead to the development of hiring quotas, so why should they now? The debate over legislative language as the Civil Rights Act of 1990 has evolved over the last year has been very complex. But it seems only fair for an *In These Times* writer to ensure that the position taken by civil-rights advocates is reviewed carefully and understood clearly. I have the impression that Judis studied the administration's view far more extensively than the view of civil-right advocates.

Judis assumes that Democrats will be hurt if they support the Civil Rights Act, even though there has been strong bipartisan support by diverse constituencies for strengthening civil-rights protection. He may be right that this bill would not establish a large-scale economic program that would redistribute wealth and services, but it does represent a major effort to reinstate basic employment-related rights. It should be supported for this reason alone.

Torry Dickinson
Washington, D.C.

The other Third World

THE ARTICLE BY PAUL HOCKENOS AND JANE HUNTER (*ITT*, July 18), while concerned about conditions that might affect the continuation of apartheid in South Africa (as we all

should be), merely waves its hands at the historical situations in Eastern, Central and North Central Europe. In so doing, it gives the impression that the dismantling of apartheid and the support of anti-imperialist Third World movements are the only goals of humanitarian interest.

On the contrary, anyone remotely aware of the conditions of life in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, the Baltic and Russia proper must have experienced the sense of historical vertigo I did while reading that these countries are engaged in "a near-total abandonment of the Third World."

Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and East Germany are members of the Third World. It should come as no surprise that Poland will not be sending out much foreign aid this year. If anything, the only foreign aid of any interest to a Pole is whatever will be coming in from outside. In fairly assessing the significance of growing economic ties between certain Warsaw Pact countries and South Africa it is necessary to illuminate the difficulties these countries face in trying to recover from so many decades of increasingly sclerotic bureaucratic socialism. Hockenos and Hunter imply that the Hungarians, faced with a world of other options, simply chose to do business with Botha and his boys. If you expect to make that plausible, a good deal more evidence will be required.

I will close by making a modest proposal: if Western anti-apartheid movements wish to pressure these incipient democracies, let them combine their complaints with real efforts to encourage their own governments and citizens to come to the aid of the collapsing economies whose desperate actions they find morally unacceptable. Don't do to the Hungarians what Ronald Reagan tried to do to the Nicaraguans: don't interpret their historical process entirely in terms of American perceptions of the politically correct.

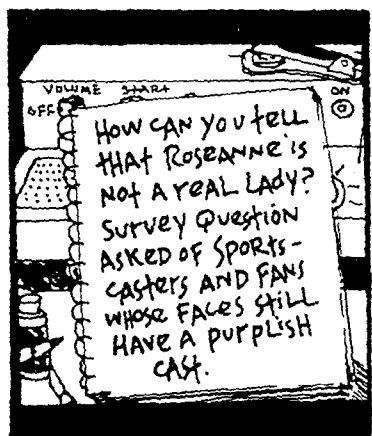
Jason Potter
Denver, Colo.

Corrections

The title of a book by Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon was incorrectly stated in "The First Stone" (*ITT*, Aug. 15). The correct title is *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media*, published last month by Lyle Stuart. For information on getting a copy of the book, call 1-800-447-BOOK.

Also, in "Unchosen chastity," in the same issue, the name of Fran Hosken, editor of the Lexington, Mass.-based *Women's International Network News*, was incorrectly spelled.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

U.S. takes the moral high ground after years of nourishing Hussein

In these days of national unity and high moral purpose against Saddam Hussein, it is good to remember just how hypocritical the U.S. appears in the eyes of many people on the planet, particularly in the Third World.

The U.S. nourished Saddam Hussein almost from the earliest days. There is a strong case for believing that the CIA, regarding the Iraqi Communist Party as the target of opportunity, collaborated with the Ba'athist coup of 1963 and furnished lists of Communists who were then seized and murdered.

This pattern of assistance continued until only a brief moment before Iraq invaded Kuwait. All through the '80s, when Saddam's abominations—the gassing of thousands of Kurds, torture and murder of children—were well known, the U.S. furnished him crucial support in his war against Iran, including satellite intelligence, helicopters and naval escorts for tankers.

In the U.N. Human Rights Commission, the U.S. helped deflect an examination of Iraq's savage abuses earlier this year. Only 10 days before the invasion, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near-Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy was asked in an interview in the *International Herald Tribune* if he agreed that Saddam was acting like Hitler. Murphy said the comparison was "too glib" and that Saddam "is a rough, direct-talking leader."

The parallels between Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and Bush's of Panama are obvious, and it requires little imagination to

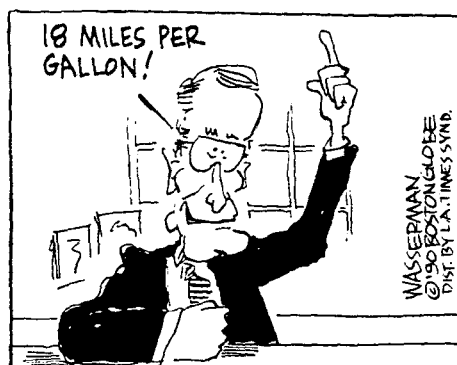
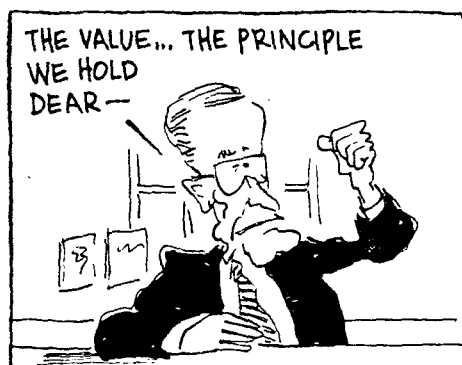
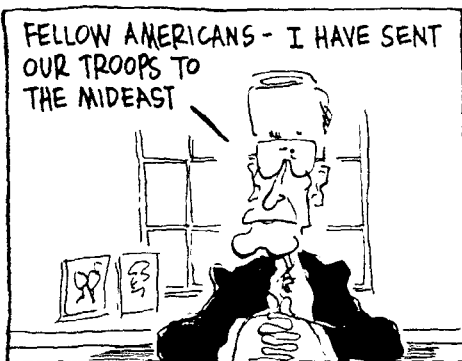
It's this shifting position that strikes folks out there, particularly in the Third World, as peculiarly hypocritical. One day Saddam Hussein is the West's bulwark against Ayatollah Khomeini; the next he's evil incarnate and openly invoked in the U.S. press as a worthy target for assassination.

contrast administration outrage at ravished Kuwait with its support for Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Israel has been sitting on Arab lands since 1967, and Turkey—now praised by Bush for aiding in the sanctions—has been illegally holding Northern Cyprus since 1974. When Saddam launched his invasion of Iran on Sept. 22, 1980, the U.N. Security Council failed to consider the matter for nearly two weeks. Even then, amid what was being described as an Iraqi blitzkrieg, there was not condemnation from the Security Council but a call for a "ceasefire in place" when the Iraqis were 30 miles inside Iranian territory.

United nations: Let us consider in more detail—as a paradigm of the hypocrisy noted above—the sudden rediscovery by U.S. politicians and commentators of the

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



United Nations as a splendid body, emblem of mankind's most virtuous aspirations. In a typical editorial on August 6, the *Boston Globe* announced "the U.N.'s coming of age," saying that with the three resolutions against Iraq's aggression passed by the Security Council "the United Nations may finally achieve the lofty status its founders sought 45 years ago."

What that fine phrase "coming of age" actually means is that, for once, the U.S. and the rest of the world were in step. In years when this has not been the case and the U.S. was in a minority in the Security Council and the General Assembly, the U.N. was denounced here as a "Third World talking shop," sadly short of lofty status.

Being essentially a mouthpiece for the state, the U.S. press has mostly managed through the last decade to overlook the degree of isolation of the U.S. from the rest of the world. To take some examples (there are more in Noam Chomsky's *Necessary Illusions*): In June 1986 the World Court condemned the U.S. for its "unlawful use of force" in mining Nicaragua's harbors, in supporting the contras and in conducting illegal economic warfare. The court ordered the U.S. to stop violating international law and to pay reparations. Congress promptly voted \$100 million for the contras.

In November 1986 the U.N. Security Council passed, 11 to one with three abstentions, a resolution calling on the U.S. to observe international law. The U.S. vetoed it. Nicaragua then went to the General Assembly, which voted 94 to three (the U.S., Israel, El Salvador), calling on the U.S. to comply with the World Court ruling. In 1987, at the time of the Washington summit and the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty, the U.N. General Assembly voted 154 to one with no abstentions to oppose the buildup of weapons in outer space. It voted 135 to one against the development of new weapons of mass destruction. In both of these cases, the U.S. cast the lone negative vote. The U.S. press was mostly silent.

In the same session the General Assembly passed a resolution condemning "terrorism wherever and by whomever committed." The vote was 153 to two, with Honduras abstaining. It's not hard to figure why the

U.S. and Israel objected, since the resolution contained the statement that "nothing in the resolution would prejudice the right of peoples, particularly those under colonial or racist regimes, or under foreign occupation or other forms of dominion, to struggle for self-determination, freedom and independence, or to seek and receive support for that end." When Yasser Arafat renounced terrorism he did so within the terms of that U.N. resolution, which all NATO countries except the U.S. supported. These days, the emir of Kuwait would prob-

ably take the same position as Arafat.

To take one final example, in January the Security Council voted 13 to one, with Britain abstaining, to condemn the sacking by U.S. troops of the residence of the Nicaraguan ambassador in Panama. No talk then in the U.S. press about the U.N.'s lofty ideals.

In sum, when the world disagrees with the U.S., the world is crazy. All through the '50s, when the U.S. controlled the place, the U.N. was extolled as the locus of visionary statesmanship and the Soviets were reviled for their vetoes. Disgusted talk about Third World domination came later, in the '70s and '80s, when the boot was on the other foot.

Double standard: It's this shifting posture that strikes folk out there, particularly in the Third World, as peculiarly hypocritical. One day Saddam Hussein is the West's bulwark against Ayatollah Khomeini; the next he's evil incarnate and openly invoked in the U.S. press as a worthy target for assassination.

So yes, Hussein, tyrant that he indubitably is, is getting a good deal of support inside the Arab world from people infuriated at the double standard. "What did they [the U.S.] do to stop the [1982 Israeli] invasion of Lebanon?" asked a Palestinian computer programmer quoted in a report in the *London Times*. "What have they done about the bloody occupation of the West Bank?" The answer is that the U.S. has done nothing.

So, as the escalation of the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia begins, we may as well be clear about the dominant opinion in the region—of people in the street, so to speak, rather than terrified sheiks and U.S. clients—about the moral credentials of this proud upholder of the rule of law. ■

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn.

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Twenty years of media strikes against feminism

By Susan J. Douglas

TWENTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH, tens of thousands of American women took to the streets to say they weren't gonna take it anymore. They marched, they chanted, they clenched their fists and they threw cosmetics, detergents and high heels into Freedom Trash Cans. They carried signs that read, "Sisters of the World, Unite!" and "Don't Cook Dinner! Starve a Rat Today!" Their actions provoked amused condescension, shocked outrage and condemnation. Their actions also changed American society irrevocably.

The day was Aug. 26, 1970, the 50th anniversary of the passage of women's suffrage and the day earmarked by feminists for the Women's Strike for Equality. Women were urged to drop their stenographers' pads, their laundry baskets and their compliant, nurturing demeanor, to strike for a day in protest of U.S. sexism. Demonstrations were planned in more than two dozen cities: in New York City between 10,000 and 20,000 women marched down Fifth Avenue, closing down the street during rush hour.

Organizers of the strike, a coalition of radical and liberal feminists, agreed on the following demands: equal opportunity for women in employment and education, 24-hour child-care centers and abortion on demand. They also urged women to boycott four products whose advertising was offensive and degrading to women: *Cosmopolitan* magazine; Silva Thins cigarettes; Ivory Liquid; and Pristeen, the infamous "feminine hygiene" spray. The strike was the first coordinated nationwide feminist demonstration—and the largest demonstration up to that time for women's rights.

The fouling of feminism: In this age of "I'm not a feminist, but..." when feminism has become a dirty word, it is important that we commemorate this day, especially since I doubt that the mainstream media will, unless they do it with a wink, a wince or a "look how far you girls have come" line. From this day, two decades ago, we can chart how far, indeed, we have and have not come. We can see how the media representations of us have changed. And if we go back and see how this event was covered at the time, we can see how feminism came to be a dirty word.

One of the major targets of the

women's movement was the media and the way advertisers, magazines and TV shows portrayed women. It was a time when Eastern Airlines felt it could launch a campaign featuring seductive stewardesses who purred invitingly to the TV audience, "Hi. I'm Sheila. Fly me." Women in ads showed no greater rapture than when a White Knight rode into their kitchens to help make the floor

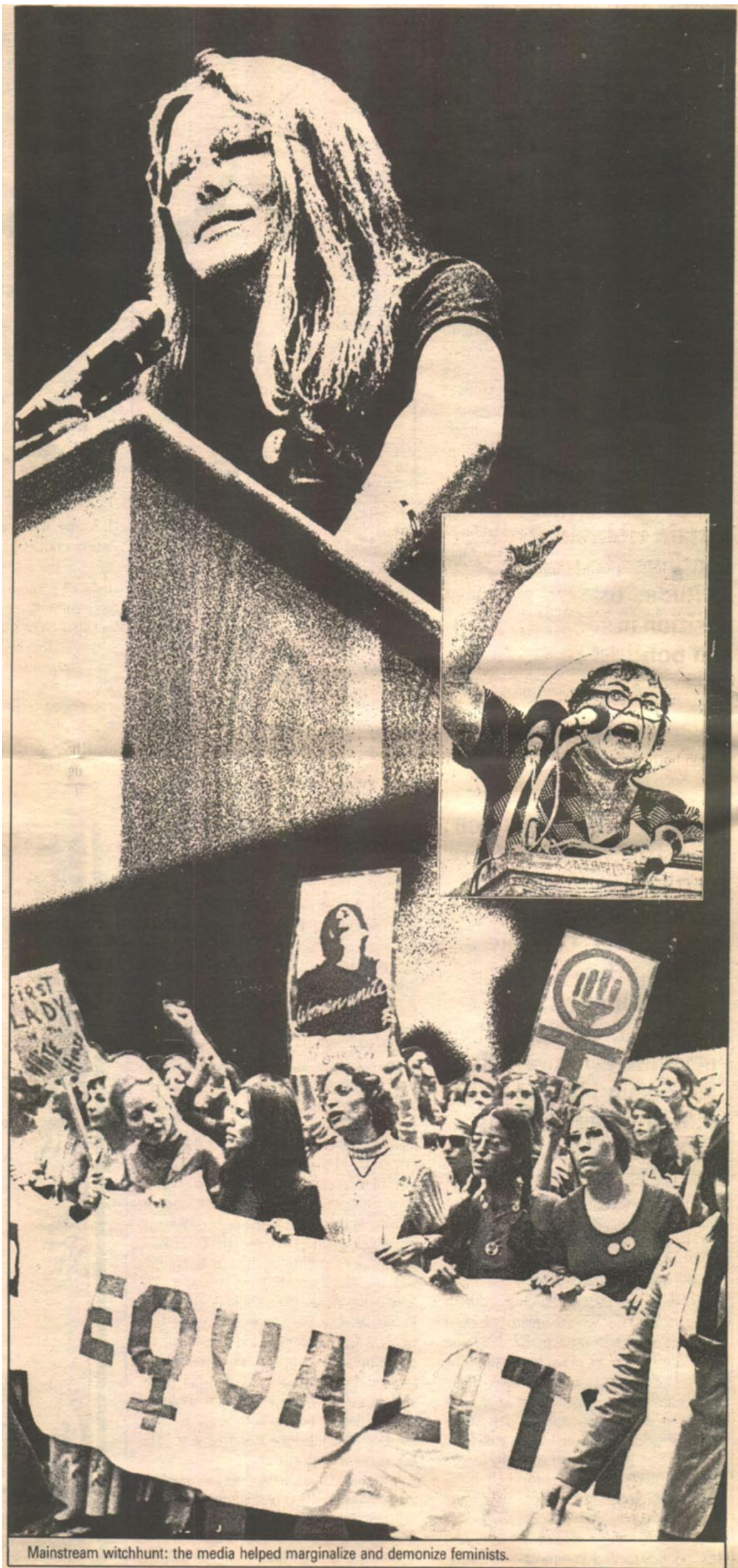
WOMEN

sparkle. In the news media, there were no women anchors at the networks, few women working at local affiliates except as weathergirls, and women journalists were consigned to the women's pages and society reporting.

It is hardly shocking, then, given the unapologetic and pervasive sexism of the mass media at the time, that coverage of the strike would be less than sympathetic. What is still surprising and unsettling, even with 20 years of distance, is the vehement derision and antipathy that characterized stories about the strike and the women's movement in general. A telling contradiction ran through the coverage. The movement was consistently cast as a highly unrepresentative fringe group that lacked any influence with most women or men and thus had little chance of really changing American society. At the same time, though, these supposedly ineffectual feminists were also held up as a potentially dangerous, even slightly demonic threat.

Paper of record? One of the worst offenders was the *New York Times*. In a sidebar accompanying coverage of the strike, a headline read derisively, "Leading Feminist Puts Hairdo Before Strike." In the tried and true mode of emphasizing women's appearance, the paper considered the fact that Betty Freidan got her hair done before the day's activities to be eminently newsworthy—and revealing. The story helped illustrate the editorial in the paper, which deplored the movement's "publicity-seeking exhibitionism" and "attention-getting antics."

Other stories featured were "For Most Women, 'Strike' Day Was Just a Topic of Conversation" and "Traditional Groups Prefer to Ignore Women's Lib." Those "traditional groups" were the Junior League, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Young Women's Chris-



Mainstream witchhunt: the media helped marginalize and demonize feminists.

tian Association, which the *Times* asserted had "for decades ... championed women's rights." These groups considered the movement "bizarre, alien and totally unacceptable." Furthermore, they found feminists to be "ridiculous exhibitionists, a band of wild lesbians," or "communists." The *Times* approvingly quoted Mrs. Saul Schary, incoming president of the "2.3 million member National Council of Women" who asserted, "There's no discrimination of women like they say there is." She then offered her assessment of women active in the movement: "So many of them are just so unattractive.... I wonder if they're completely well."

Grace Lichtenstein, in her "Just a Topic of Conversation" story, noted that "for the vast majority of women, yesterday was a day simply to go about one's business—whether that meant going to a job, attending a

\$100,000 from a book on how tough it is to be a woman." Both publications focused specifically on Millett's critique of marriage and the family and suggested that to be a feminist one had to be anti-family.

Unsound bites: By the time of the strike, television coverage of the movement had come to follow a predictable pattern. First, a demonstration would be presented, visually documenting how unruly women get when set loose in the public sphere. The newscaster would emphasize the radicalism of the women and then include excerpts from a speech by a well-known feminist such as Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem or Bella Abzug.

Then, to get "the other side," the newsmen would interview either hostile onlookers or go out of his way to visit a supermarket to interview "regular" women. On the day of the strike, CBS interviewed

critique of patriarchy was powerful and devastating. But these women, who were repeatedly misquoted, ridiculed and demonized in the dominant media (the witch metaphor was pervasive), came to stand for all feminists and to demonstrate that the women's movement was monolithic, inflexible and could not possibly have much to say to or for most women.

Feminism flattened: "Many of the new feminists are surprisingly violent in mood," observed *Time*, "and seem to be trying, in fact, to repel other women rather than attract them." "Soon," predicted the magazine, "we may expect legions of female fireman, airline pilots, sanitation men and front-line soldiers (although anthropologist Margaret Mead thinks they would be too fierce)." The stereotype of the feminist as a deliberately unattractive, castrating, anti-family, strident haridan was sealed. The many nuances and levels of feminism were flattened out by such personifications, and the vast middle ground of feminism disappeared.

Coverage of the strike typified coverage of the movement in general, in which condescension and derision blended with an emphasis on the internal divisions of the movement, consistent underestimation of its supporters and influence and marginalization of feminists as completely out of touch with the rest of the country. Repeatedly coverage suggested that women had to be brainwashed, to go through a conversion experience, as if indoctrinated into a cult, in order to join the movement. Young women were especially "fertile ground for the seeds of discontent."

Time described consciousness-raising groups as "rap sessions" in which women "drum their second-class status into each other by testifying to various indignities." Radical feminists "soon attracted a number of women who otherwise had no radical leanings at all. The latest recruits include factory workers, high school girls, a number of discontented housewives and even a coven or two of grandmothers."

It is not surprising, given such coverage, which was for many Amer-

icans their only initial exposure to the women's movement, that feminism became a dirty word and that the Equal Rights Amendment ultimately failed. But it is also testimony to the power of women's real lived experience that, despite such coverage, support for certain of the movement's goals continued to increase every year, especially among working women.

This cultural schizophrenia about feminism—a repudiation of feminists but support for certain isolated feminist goals—continues to mark not just women's attitudes toward themselves and their position in society but a host of economic and political realities. A review of some key statistics shows how far we still have to go and the economic costs to women and society in general of buying into this ambivalence about feminism.

"Better" not good enough: In 1970, women comprised 40 percent of the labor force; today, that figure has grown to 54 percent. Back then, the median income for men was \$6,670, while for women it was \$2,237. By 1986, the figure for men was \$17,114 but for women still a lowly \$7,610. More women are finishing college now, and more than twice as many black and Hispanic women are graduating than in 1970. More women are working, more are getting advanced training and more women are entering the previously all-male professions of lawyer, engineer, university professor and doctor.

But women still dominate in the lower-paid service professions and, on average, still earn approximately one-half of what men do. In 1975, there were no women in the U.S. Senate; 20 years after the strike, there are two. In the 15 years between 1975 and today, we have gone from 19 women in the U.S. House of Representatives to 25. And as *Fortune* magazine just reported, of the 4,012 directors and top executives of 799 major companies, only 19 are women. Getting to the top, for those who want to, remains an elusive and clearly blocked goal.

The feminization of poverty under Reagan hit lower-income women hard but was especially devastating to women of color who have chil-

dren. Quality child-care facilities for all women remains a fantasy, a luxury that only a fraction of working mothers can count on, even though most mothers have to work. And the call for "abortion on demand": well, we all know what's happened to that.

Today there are more women in print and broadcast journalism, but the ones on TV still have to be slender and attractive (and preferably young and blond) to get anywhere. Beauty is still more important than brains. There are more professional women in TV shows and films, but they are still outnumbered by bimbos, helpless victims, helpmates, sex objects and the occasional tough-as-nails or completely deranged feminist.

Ads continue to bombard women with the message that if you have pores, lines on your face or thighs larger than a 12-year-old's, you are nothing, and most women, sadly, continue to believe this. Heavy-metal and rap music are both infected by a vehement—and dangerous—misogyny. And it's not like we've made a dent in wife-beating, rape or the abuse of children.

Yes, some things really are better. There are more opportunities for women, especially educated, middle-class women. Those of us who are lucky enough to have a job that in 1970 we would not have had a prayer of getting, who have husbands who change diapers and do the laundry, who went to a school that 20 years ago would not have admitted us, who can live openly as lesbians—all of us are indebted to the women who organized and participated in the Women's Strike for Equality. But we must also reflect on the costs to society—and to women and children in particular—of allowing one-dimensional stereotypes of feminism, which still prevail in the mass media, to shape both personal and public politics. Because you need to come a long way, baby, before the vision of a just society imagined at the strike comes close to being a reality for all women, rich or poor, black, white or brown, in America. ■

Susan J. Douglas is writing a book about media coverage of feminism.

Cultural schizophrenia about feminism—a repudiation of feminists but support for certain isolated feminist goals—continues to mark not just women's attitudes toward themselves and their position in society but a host of economic and political realities.

Broadway matinee, having one's hair done or washing the baby's diapers." She then quoted from a range of women hostile or indifferent to the strike. Such quotations vastly outnumbered those from the women who actually came to march down Fifth Avenue and who felt the women's movement did indeed speak to them.

This same motif characterized the newsmagazines' coverage of the strike. Despite the fact that women shut down Fifth Avenue, *Newsweek* emphasized that "lib supporters came up short" in getting women out in the streets, explaining that "women's lib was a badly splintered movement." The magazine reiterated that the major challenge confronting feminists was convincing a majority of their sisters that there are major wrongs imposed on all American women."

Time opened its story on the strike with, "These are the times that try men's souls, and they are likely to get much worse before they get better." Noting that the movement "has not produced much humor," the article cited *Sexual Politics* as the new bible for feminists and described Kate Millett as "the Mao-Tse-tung of women's liberation," "a brilliant misfit in a man's world" who "lived in a dashiki and workpants and didn't wash her hair." The magazine quoted one of Millett's dissertation advisers, who said, "Reading the book is like sitting with your testicles in a nutcracker."

Frank J. Prial, profiling Millett for the *New York Times*, reported with a smirk that she "swears like a gunnery sergeant and stands to make

women shoppers in Chicago who said, "I'm totally against it. I don't know what women's libbers want to be liberated from," and "Men belong out of the house, and women belong in the house." Another asserted, without correction by the reporter, that women are already "paid very well."

One of the effects of this kind of juxtaposition, in which women with complaints were shown only in highly charged, dramatic, public demonstrations and women without complaints were seen in more tranquil, everyday settings, was that women shoppers opposed to the movement appeared more thoughtful, rational and persuasive than their feminist counterparts. The visual positioning of them, in places such as supermarket parking lots, made these women seem much more connected to and in touch with the real fabric of everyday life.

The stark contrast that emerged from all this coverage was radical feminists on the one hand versus anti-feminist housewives and mothers on the other. For the viewer somewhere between these poles, there was no point of identification. There was a disproportionate emphasis on radical feminists in the news because they were often visually and rhetorically iconoclastic and thus fit the journalistic standards for newsworthiness.

To be sure, there were many women involved in the movement who were politically radical and hostile to bourgeois America—certainly organizations such as WITCH, Red-stockings or Bread and Roses embraced such radicalism, and their



Habits of Industry: White Culture and the Transformation of the Carolina Piedmont

By Allen Tullos
University of North Carolina Press
419 pp., \$12.95 paper

By Karl Bermann

IN THE 1920S, NORTH CAROLINA DIS-
placed Massachusetts as the na-
tion's leading textile producer.
An industrialized New South had
come of age. With its textiles, cigar-
ettes and furniture, the Piedmont re-
gion of the Carolinas led the way for
Dixie's resurgence.

A band of hill country some hun-
dred miles wide, a middle ground
between the Appalachians and the
coastal lowlands, the Piedmont has
a unique personality. The Scotch-
Irish and German Protestant funda-
mentalists who homesteaded the

HISTORY

area in the 18th century were iso-
lated geographically until after the
Civil War. From their religious con-
victions and the imperatives of sur-
vival they welded a homogeneous,
biblically patriarchal and austere
culture.

For the most part, they were yeo-
man farmers with ambivalent atti-
tudes toward both the institution of
slavery and the lowland plantation
oligarchy that ruled the Carolinas in
the antebellum era. Slaveholding
was not widespread in the Piedmont,
with the result that, in contrast to
the coastal plains, blacks remained
a minority.

Grist for the mill: The Civil War
defeat of the Old South's planter aris-
tocracy opened the way for Northern
capital to lay the tracks of the South-
ern Railroad from Richmond to At-
lanta straight through the Carolina
Piedmont. The post-war era also saw
the marriage of Yankee finance with
an incipient indigenous class of mer-
chant-capitalists who, as early as the
1830s, had established rudimentary
water-powered cotton and grist
mills in the Piedmont. What at-
tracted capital to the region was
cheap cotton, plentiful water power
and the white population's strong
Protestant work ethic—its deeply in-
grained "habits of industry."

Those same "habits of industry"
have furnished Allen Tullos with
subject and title for a book about
industrial revolution, class relations
and cultural change in the Carolina
Piedmont. *Habits of Industry* tells of
the region's transformers and its
transformed, of the revolution's vic-
tors and victims. Tullos follows the
rise of those such as the Dukes, the
Loves (of Burlington Industries) and
the R.J. Reynolds who made the
leap from upcountry upstarts to New
South nabobs and the simultaneous
descent of the rest from independent
antebellum yeomen (and not-so-in-
dependent yeowomen) to anony-



The paternalistic authoritarianism of the mills echoed the community's "fatherly voices."

The Protestant worse ethic: habits die hard in the Carolina Piedmont

mous "hands" tending the looms and
spindles for long hours at starvation
wages.

One writer quoted by Tullos de-
scribes the leaders of the Piedmont's
Scotch-Irish settlers as "militant
moralists" who raised free enter-
prise "to the level of a theological
dogma." Tullos finds the stamp of
Piedmont Protestantism's "severe"
and "authoritarian spirit" in the
harsh regime of the 20th-century
cotton mills. The paternalistic au-
thoritarianism of the mills echoed the
"fatherly voices" that imposed
"consent or silence around family
dinner tables."

Indeed, the mill owners preferred
to hire entire families, the bigger the
better, including children as young
as 10. Parents accepted responsibil-
ity for helping enforce job-site dis-
cipline over children during the 55-
and 60-hour workweeks. Nor were
children free to quit without their
parents' consent. "I believe there are
just about as many children spoiled
by indulgence as there are by over-
work," declared D.A. Tompkins,
owner of several cotton mills and
the *Charlotte Observer*, at the turn
of the century.

Incredibly, upon entering the
mills these children often found
lighter work and more free time than
they had on the tenant farms they
left behind. There, in the era after

the farm crisis of the late 19th cen-
tury, long days picking cotton were
followed by an arduous routine of
domestic chores.

Case studies: Icy Norman began
working for Burlington Mills in Bur-
lington, N.C., rather late in life—at
age 18. Faithfully serving the com-
pany for 47 years, her reward at re-
tirement in 1976 was that Burlington
executives treated her to lunch and
a tour of the company's main office
in Greensboro: "They carried me all
over that thing. ... You know what
they had in the top [floor]? They had
was white." But company executives
would not let Norman work the addi-
tional year she needed to become
eligible for \$12,500 from a newly in-
stituted profit-sharing plan.

Grover Hardin of Greenville, S.C.,
went to work in the mills at age 10,
his wife Alice at 15. Hardin described
for Tullos working all day in a cloud
of cotton dust: "You'd cough and
sneeze and cough and fill your
mouth full of tobacco and anything
else to try to keep this dust from
strangling you." After years of
breathing problems, of doctors tell-
ing him he had "just a little touch of
asthma," Hardin finally learned that
what he had was brown lung disease.

Completely disabled, he eventu-
ally won a worker's compensation
award of \$12,000—the maximum al-
lowed under South Carolina state

law—from Dan River, Inc. Comment-
ing on abortive attempts to unionize
his mill over the years, Hardin ob-
served, "That was a sin to the hands,
you know. They weren't supposed
to mess with anything like that."

Sprawling saga: The story of
capitalist transformation in the
Carolina uplands is multifaceted: the
"successes" of the Scrooge-like en-
trepreneurs who were revered al-
most as folk heroes, the betrayal and
ruination of self-sufficient family
farmers seduced by the lure of cot-
ton and tobacco cash-crop produc-
tion, their subsequent conversion
from smallholders into tenants and
finally into mill hands. Whole
families were herded by necessity
into the company mill villages and
the cotton mills themselves with
their ever-speeding-up spindles and
looms.

There are the workers, disciplined
by puritanical religious dogma and
straitjacketed by superstition and
lack of education into submis-
sive and too-long-uncomplaining
drudges (the region's boosters ad-
vertised them as "old native stock
... untouched by unrest and un-
American ideas"). Tullos incorpo-
rates the oral histories of partici-
pants and vividly illuminates the
personal side of these transforma-
tions, though the result, like its nar-
rators, sometimes rambles.

A more troubling deficiency:
however, is that Tullos' approach
leaves untold contextual aspects of
the story that would bring it up to
date, and without which the ac-
count remains incomplete. Though
in his epilogue Tullos acknowl-
edges the importance of black-
white relations in improving the
situation of the superexploited
white workers he studies, he has
entirely left out of his narrative the
history of relations, or non-rela-
tions, between black and white
working classes.

The white culture that Tullos
views as central to the shaping of
Piedmont capitalism has been
shaped itself, at least in part, by
race relations. To mention an
example from recent history, the
Greensboro lunchcounter sit-ins of
the 1960s, which had such a great
impact on the civil-rights move-
ment and the country as a whole,
undoubtedly reverberated in the
Piedmont where they occurred. For
one thing, the civil-rights move-
ment led to the admission of blacks
into the Piedmont textile mills,
from which they had formerly been
excluded. Absent also from *Habits
of Industry* is any but the most
casual mention of the sporadic at-
tempts at unionization and occa-
sional spontaneous rebellions that
have punctuated the Piedmont's
proletarianization. These might
show that old habits, while persis-
tent, are not unkickable. ■

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living in Hampton, Va.

IN THE ARTS

The Two Jakes

Directed by Jack Nicholson

By Pat Aufderheide

Jack jukes, but *Jakes* a joke



Jack Nicholson misdirects his talents in *Chinatown* sequel.

JACK NICHOLSON HAS SAID THAT AS an actor he likes to let himself go and depend on the director to guide him. In *The Two Jakes*, the much-awaited sequel to *Chinatown*, Nicholson as director fails Nicholson the actor and creates a soggy mess.

The Two Jakes is not just the sequel to a popular 16-year-old movie but the second in what screenwriter Robert Towne imagined as a three-part saga of the betrayal and downfall of a great city, Los Angeles. (Towne has written socially insightful scripts, such as *Shampoo*, *Personal Best* and, more recently, entertainment machines such as *Days of Thunder* and *Tequila Sunrise*.)

Oil and water: In *Chinatown*, the big-business villain committed heinous atrocities in the search for control over the key resource of water. In *The Two Jakes*, the key to the criminality is oil. In this sequel, as in the original, pantingly personal and shocking crimes become the avenue into corporate schemes that betray the body social. Jake Gittes (Nicholson), matrimonial detective, is back, flabbier and more tired but just as full of an offbeat integrity. Hired by a local developer, also named Jake (Harvey Keitel), the detective blunders into oil and construction intrigue when his client murders his own business partner, who turns out to be the adulterer.

A mysterious tape drags the daughter from *Chinatown*—the product of an incestuous union—back into the story. Then it's a winding road to the sentimental denoue-

ment, and we drive down a fair bit of it with Gittes, who indulges in windy and pointless soliloquies on the way.

If people went to the movies for the production design, *The Two Jakes*, along with *Dick Tracy* and a host of other recent films, would be doing fine. It's got some striking images, and its costuming and color scheme are not only authentic to the late '40s period but also ominously suggestive of intrigue and evil—especially the vampy women's costumes and the latticework of electric lines and oil derricks over the landscape. But a movie's look only takes you so far before you start thinking about dinner or the babysitter.

There's also no particular need for a movie—especially a gumshoe movie—to make much logical sense. It's more about mood and emotional

drama. *The Big Sleep* made more sense as a movie than it did in Raymond Chandler's original novel, but not by much. *Chinatown's* plot

FILM

was so intricate that if you went out for popcorn you were doomed; it was clear in retrospect but a data barrage as you went along. *The Two Jakes* makes even less sense on a moment-to-moment basis, partly because it assumes a familiarity with *Chinatown* but mostly because the script is a jumble (Robert Towne gets credit, but the script was worked over endlessly and finally altered by Nicholson). It awkwardly introduces elements that disappear and reappear and shifts the emotional weight of the characters. The only constant

is the moody self-indulgence of Jake Gittes, and that's not dramatic.

Slow boat to *Chinatown*: The flatulent quality of *The Two Jakes* doesn't distinguish it much in the current movie environment. It's most shocking (and probably most interesting) to the small minority of viewers who still remember *Chinatown*. That movie, directed by Roman Polanski, was wound so tightly that it defied suspension of disbelief even as it spun a tale of grotesque modern evil. Edited with the sharpest of razors, it left no room for breath. The roles were precisely defined so that moral ambiguity came to have horrific implications, and John Huston's villainy was a tour de force. Finally, the film had a grimly implacable message about the merging of corporate and personal evil and its engulfing power in

the freewheeling world of urban development.

By contrast, *The Two Jakes* is intolerably sloppy. Loose editing allows scenes to dangle past their end, sometimes to give a little extra screen time and more histrionics to Nicholson; the movie doesn't need its two-hour-and-18-minute running time. Visual clues lie there flat on the screen, and portentous statements echo. The voice-over narration, apparently tossed in at the last minute, adds nothing but a sense that something went horribly wrong in the later stages of assembly.

But the most important loss is a grip on the magnitude of the social crime involved in the manipulation of Los Angeles' rich resources. That was *Chinatown's* achievement by the portrayal of personal evil to create a sense of social evil. Here there are sharply incisive moments that stand out all too distinctly—for instance, when the developer Jake explains to Gittes that in his suburban development Hispanics and Jews are excluded and "the customer is always right." But Jake, the key to the intrigue, is a banal character (Keitel does his best, but the material isn't there) surrounded by banal characters and his involvement in evil ultimately comes from a hapless mishmash of good intentions and blind affection. The degradation of the physical and social environment becomes a byproduct of a welter of good intentions, bad education, bad luck and bad genes.

If *Chinatown* had the crisp clarity of fresh water, *The Two Jakes* has the feel of an oil slick nobody's willing to clean up. And 10 minutes out of the theater not only can't you quite remember what happened, you have no reason to try. ■

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The House of Love

The House of Love
Polygram Records

By Mark G. Judge

Pop homewreckers, The House of Love

Love's second disc is self-titled, just like the first *The House of Love*. In other words, if you say your favorite album is *The House of Love*, you're referring to two albums. This can get confusing, particularly for a fickle and impatient pop audience. This redundancy is odd, too, considering that The House of Love is one of the most lyrical and expressive groups around. You'd think the foursome could have come up with a title.

Yet I don't think Guy Chadwick, The House of Love's shy, morose leader, cares about the LP's title. He wants to keep things simple, preferably on the level of a late-night hushed conversation between heartbroken but articulate lovers. This isn't pop that you'd listen to on the way down to the beach for the weekend—though you might on the drive back, particularly if it's raining.

That Velvet's touch: Chadwick

emphasizes in interviews that his obsession is with the band's sound, the atmosphere of the music as opposed

MUSIC

to the lyrics' literal poignancy. He aims for the kind of miraculous musical accident the Velvet Underground excelled in. Chadwick himself doesn't have a clear answer to exactly how they produce such lovely-sounding music.

It seemed implausible that the Manchester band could match the shimmering transcendence of *The House of Love* of 1988, which the English music press positively drooled over. They haven't. The first *House of Love* is a classic and will be influencing young musicians long after the band itself is defunct. But the second effort is a blessing by

ordinary rock standards: ambient and sorrowful yet often uplifting, it's the happy pop sounds of the early '60s meeting the teen-suicide isolationism of the '90s. *The House of Love* sounds like a relic and stings like a razor nick.

It's deceptively upbeat at times. "Shine On" springs and dances on playful guitar licks and is ostensibly a paean to the incandescent energy of youth—but listen closely. On "In a Room," my favorite track, a pleasant a cappella intro that sounds like the Beach Boys fades to the bright, jumpy jangle of drugged bluegrass, and Chadwick launches into what must pass in Manchester for honky-tonk: "There are lessons for the lonely/ When I'm drunk in a room, that's when I think of you/ Oh my baby, she went AWOL/ Drove to a shop, never to return/ And it broke me like a flower/ Baked in the sun/ The hot Spanish sun." As the song gathers momentum the tone quickly grows ominous, like a cool spring shower churning itself into a deadly thunderstorm. By the time he gets to the part about "a lesson in the

blood. The cold English blood" and keeps desperately pleading that "I can't slow down," the effect is chilling.

Yet at times *The House of Love* is too esoteric. The first album managed to achieve a smooth coherence no matter how tenuous the foundation in reality, but the second sometimes gets so quirky it baffles, losing its footing. "Someone's Got to Love You" drags where the similar "Man to Child" from the first disc shines, and "I Don't Know Why I Love You," the new single, doesn't touch the luscious spiral of "Christine," the first album's smash. But even while floundering Chadwick makes other contemporary gloom merchants sound like spoiled punks. In these songs there's glimmering beauty despite the most relentless despair, perhaps because of relentless despair—that might explain the cover, which is a butterfly stenciled on a brick wall. *The House of Love* is a gorgeous album. For that matter, so is *The House of Love*. ■

Mark G. Judge is a critic living in Maryland.

New money

Continued from page 24

tracking cash in a Drug War measure called "A bill to establish constitutional procedures for the imposition of the sentence of death, and for other purposes." Of course, each piece of currency already has a unique serial number, but there is no feasible way of tracking every bill.

Big bills, small minds: As an alternative to tracking all of the money, serious study has been given to the possibilities of eliminating large-denomination bills, specifically \$50s and \$100s. Again, it was Drug War hysteria at work. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 called on the Treasury to study the effects of eliminating large-denomination bills. The results of the study, issued last September, suggested that such a change would do more harm than good. Statistics from law-enforcement agencies showed that the large bills were not as prevalent in illicit transactions as was imagined by our elected officials. (Perhaps their own experience with large bills distorted their perceptions.) Further, a recall, or demonitization of existing \$50s and \$100s would greatly inconvenience countries such as Poland where the dollar functions as a second currency.

A variation on this theme was a plan to recall all existing currency and replace it with new bills. Anyone with large amounts of cash would have to explain what they were doing with it, and, after a suitably short period of time, the old money would be declared void. While that is a common practice in most countries, it is not in the U.S. Indeed, the U.S. still honors all legal tender notes for

face value, though some Treasury notes and other non-legal-tender notes have been demonitized and the promises to pay in gold or silver that appear on most older notes are no longer valid.

Though I never saw the idea in print, it must have occurred to these enlightened legislators that they might just eliminate cash completely. It is not an essential part of the economy.

Of course, people would freak out if cash were canned. Which is a little strange because the "cash" we now use is little more than a check from the Federal Reserve Bank payable to the bearer. Payable in what? More dollars. They are presumably more liquid than checks, more universally acceptable, but not always. I saw a sign in a restaurant indicating that a driver's license and a major credit card were required in order to pay with anything larger than a \$20 bill.

Residue of records: There are some technical differences between the Fed's checks and the ones we write. Indeed, the commercial banking system is based on these differences, but their representation of value is based on the same premises and cash could actually be replaced by checks from the Federal Reserve. These differences notwithstanding, the whole cash system is just a physical form of bookkeeping where possession of the token represents ownership of the account balance. But unlike checks and electronic transfers, cash doesn't leave the same residue of records. That's the big difference that makes cash "cash." And a lot of people besides faux-liberal senators are interested in those records. Though the talk might be all drugs, don't think the IRS isn't keeping a fist in the pie.

As money transactions have become less physical and more electronic, there has been

little public debate about access to the residue of records that quietly piles up in computer memories. Whose information is it? Who controls access? Who verifies its accuracy? Now the electronic tenacles are reaching deeper into our pockets.

The new money will look the same. The same dead white male politicians will be on the front. (Death is a legal prerequisite for portraiture, enacted by Congress in 1862 after Salmon P. Chase, as Lincoln's secretary of the treasury, had his own picture put on the first Civil War issues and Spencer Clark, director of the fledgling Bureau of Engraving and Printing, put his own portrait on a 3-cent fractional currency issue.) White and male are not legal requirements. Indeed, prior to 1929, when the basic size and look of our present currency were established, there was a great variety of imagery employed—American Indians, mythological figures, allegorical paintings, bucolic panoramas, even women. While the visual design of the money displays the biases of the ruling elite, it is the invisible changes that are

most significant.

The loser in this non-debate is the once-popular notion of privacy. Indeed, it has hardly been discussed. The government, including our elected representatives, has simply assumed the right to keep track of everyone's business, looking for evil, without due cause. Guilt is tacitly assumed; innocence must be proven. Paranoia becomes policy. The possibilities for abuse have been largely ignored; the consequences of mistakes or deliberate falsification—or outright fabrication—of records are not discussed. Credit bureaus never make mistakes.

It is a peculiar oversight for a society as obsessed with money as ours is. A change in the money could have been an opportunity for just the kind of public debate that should be the hallmark of a democratic society. Instead it will be an opportunity for some information postmortems on a done deed. Thirty seconds on the nightly news should do it. "And at the Treasury Department, government officials unveiled the new currency..."

C A L E N D A R

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AMES, IA September

SOCIALIST WEEK 1990: Television and Politics. TV's effect on our perception of the social world, struggles for change, gender roles. Todd Gitlin, Douglas Kellner, Elayne Rapping. For information, call Tony Smith, (515) 294-3341.

SALT LAKE CITY, UT September 1

WE NEVER FORGET JOE HILL, a commemoration and open-air concert marking the 75th anniversary of Hill's death at Sugar House Park, the grounds of the old Utah State penitentiary and site of Hill's execution. The concert is in association with the Labor Heritage Foundation and is sponsored by The Joe Hill Organizing Committee. For further information, contact the Committee at P.O. Box 1596, Sandy, Utah, 84091, (801) 272-8762.

NEW YORK, NY September 14-16

PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE THIRD NATIONAL CONVENTION: "Mobilizing for Palestinian-Israeli Peace, a U.S. Agenda for the '90s" at the Days Inn Hotel, 440 West 57th St. Panel and workshop themes include the intifada and the PLO, challenging U.S. support for occupation, and talking about divestment from occupation. Friday evening features film presentation: Voices from Gaza. Saturday evening banquet features keynote speaker Professor Edward Said on "Prospects for Palestinian-Israeli Peace in a Changing World." For information and registration, contact Palestine Solidarity Committee, 1608 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 271-4492.

September 30

AMS/ICA/AIMS HISTORY PROJECT. Medical student and house staff activists from the 1930s and 1940s will gather for a daylong reunion and conference. In addition to reminiscing, they will evaluate and discuss the significance of this exciting and productive movement and its lessons for health activism today. Interested health professionals, students and other non-alumni/ae are also welcome. Information is available from Walter J. Lear, MD, Reunion/Conference Coordinator, Institute of Social Medicine and Community Health, 206 N. 35th St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 386-5327.

October 4-6

CLASS BIAS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EQUITY ISSUES OF THE 1990s will critically examine the state of higher education, including the impact of funding, curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional policies on poor and working-class students. Many Americans believe that college enhances social equality irrespective of one's class, race or gender. Economic restructuring, shifting political priorities, and competing claims are now challenging these traditional beliefs. Highlights include presentations by Stanley Aronowitz, Steve Brint, Leslie Hill Davidson, Patricia Gumpert, Michael Nettles, Fred Pincus and Richard Richardson. At Queens College of the City University

of New York. To register or receive information about the conference, contact Eileen Moran at the Center for Labor and Society, 65-30 Kissena Blvd., Room 329, Flushing, NY 11367, or call (718) 520-7285.

CHICAGO, IL September 30

The Chicago Metropolitan Sanctuary Alliance is sponsoring the **PEDAL FOR PEACE BIKE-A-THON** on Sunday, Sept. 30. Money raised at the Bike-A-Thon will be used to support human rights and education projects for displaced people in Guatemala and El Salvador. Registration is at 1 p.m. at the Totem Pole, Lake Shore Drive and Addison. Riders can choose a 12-mile or 24-mile route along the beautiful Lake Michigan shoreline. If you are interested in biking or sponsoring a biker, please contact the Chicago Metropolitan Sanctuary Alliance (CMSA) at (312) 899-1180.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, IL October 5-7

Thousands of student environmental activists from all 50 states and several foreign countries will gather at **CATALYST: The National Student Environmental Conference** at the University of Illinois, sponsored by the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC). Students at CATALYST will broaden the environmental movement by forging ties with minority, labor and social-justice groups. Plenary sessions held on environmental action, corporate environmental accountability, and diversity in the environmental movement. Speakers include: Ralph Nader, Helen Caldicott, Denis Hayes, Marta Benavides, John O'Connor, Winona LaDuke, Randall Hayes, and many more. For further information and registration forms, contact: CATALYST, 305 W. Elm St., #20, Urbana, IL 61801, (217) 333-2440.

TUCSON, AZ October 16-18

MANAGING WILDLIFE IN THE SOUTHWEST SYMPOSIUM. Topics include habitat management, game and nongame species. Paul R. Krausman or Norman S. Smith, 325 Biological Sciences East, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, (602) 621-3845.

BASALT, CO October 19-30

FOURTH ANNUAL PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE—Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture) applies principles found in nature to design environmentally responsible communities. Course is designed for arid and semi-arid montane environments. Topics include trees and environmental reforestation, desert homesteading, water harvesting strategies and market gardening. Contact: Jerome's Organics, P.O. Box 631, Basalt, CO 81621, (303) 927-4158.

MINNEAPOLIS, MN November 9-12

CREATING CHANGE, the third annual conference of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, will be held at the Holiday Inn Metrodome. Highlights are the Fundraising Institute and the People of Color Institute. Registration is \$120 by Sept. 14, \$150 after. For registration forms and more information on NGLTF Cooperating Organization rates, limited income rates and the conference in general, contact NGLTF, 1517 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009, Attn: Creating Change. (202) 332-6483.

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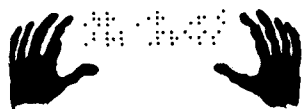
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NEW DOLLARS



By Miles DeCoster

MONEY, THE KIND WE THINK WE know and love, hard cash, ceased to exist some years ago. It didn't happen all at once; it kind of eased out one attribute at a time. Silver disappeared from coins in 1965. Check your change. Franklin Roosevelt took gold out of circulation in 1933, though the last tenuous ties between the money supply and precious metal were not severed until Richard Nixon did it in 1973. Even paper money, once redeemable in gold or silver, is a small part of today's money supply. Money in the modern economy is a set of account balances and a series of transactions. Checks and electronic transfers represent the bulk of these transactions. Ledger balances, not cash, represent the bulk of the money supply. Cash is just a messy side street. A bad neighborhood due for some serious urban renewal. Changes are in the works.

The numismatic press has been intermittently abuzz for several years about the new money. The actual product, which the best rumors project for a late '90-early '91 release, will not appear radically different from the bills currently circulating. The changes were recently outlined for a House subcommittee on appropriations by Peter Daly, director of of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP). The BEP, which prints all of our

currency as well as Treasury bills and stamps, completed a test printing of some 600,000 bills last December.

The new bills will feature some tiny printing around the portraits repeating the words "United States of America," presumably too small to be reproduced by photocopiers. The bills will also have a plastic security strip running vertically through them with the denomination visible when held up to the light.

But there is a more significant difference. A covert, invisible code, or "taggant," will be imbedded in the money that will allow it to be counted and tracked by electronic equipment. The details on this covert implant are hush-hush, but the tone of the discussions leading up to the redesign is ominous.

Cash and carry on: The BEP began the project several years ago with the intent of making our currency more difficult to counterfeit, particularly in light of new photocopier technology. Various ideas were entertained, including the use of more color, the use of holograms and even substantial design changes. But as the project wound its way through various congressional committees and the Treasury Department, the more imaginative features were worn away. Former Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III was opposed to any changes that would significantly alter the appearance of the

trusted greenback, lest the populace lose faith in a money that is primarily a product of the imagination. And in the halls of Congress, concerns about bogus bills gave way to concerns about re-election, about crime-fighting and protecting the Un-American Way.

You see, the funny thing about cash is that it's the most reliable but least traceable way to settle debts—legitimate transactions and illicit ones. Let's not forget, in the midst of Bush's oil war, there's a Drug War going on out there too.

So the focus of redesigning the currency, which began as an anti-counterfeiting move, shifted to keeping track of it—who has it, where they get it, how they spend it. One popular idea among Drug War soldiers is to routinely track the circulation of every piece of money. Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) called for a study of the possibilities of putting bar codes on the bills in a Drug War bill last October. "It [bar-coding] provides a mechanism by which our government, our law-enforcement agencies, our financial institutions, and foreign institutions as well, can efficiently track U.S. currency—bill by bill—without undue administrative burdens."

Sen. Joseph Biden (D-DE) has also called for a study on the feasibility of electronically

Continued on page 22